

A
JOURNEY
FROM
BENGAL TO ENGLAND,
THROUGH
THE NORTHERN PART OF INDIA,
KASHMIRE, AFGHANISTAN, AND PERSIA, AND
INTO RUSSIA, BY THE CASPIAN-SEA.

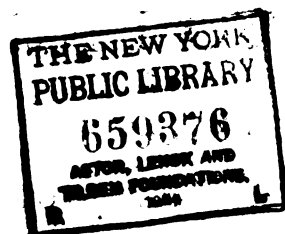
BY GEORGE FORSTER.
IN THE CIVIL SERVICE OF
THE HONOURABLE THE EAST-INDIA COMPANY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

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1798.

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NOY WEN
LIBRARY
YASSEL

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EARL CORNWALLIS,

KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE
GARTER; ONE OF HIS BRITANNICK MAJESTY'S
HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL; LIEUTENANT-
GENERAL OF HIS MAJESTY'S FORCES; GOVER-
NOR-GENERAL AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF
ALL THE POSSESSIONS AND FORCES OF HIS BRI-
TANNICK MAJESTY, AND OF THE HONOURABLE
THE UNITED COMPANY OF MERCHANTS OF ENG-
LAND, IN THE EAST-INDIES, &c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

DEDICATORY praise hath ever
been suspected of sincerity; and passes, indeed,
among men of the world, as a strain of turgid lan-
guage, designed to court favour, sooth the vanity
of a patron, or — in its best sense, to express the
hasty dictates of gratitude. — Yet, I have the con-
fidence

fidence to hope, that the tenor of this dedication will deserve a less severe censure, and that it will be even said, I have narrowed the limits of my subject.

WHEN I had resolved to intrude my book of Travels on the notice of the public, I naturally looked around, being an unknown author, for some name, to give it a sanction; not the sanction of wealth or grandeur; for they are not always the criterion of worth: but that which was to be obtained from the man, who stood eminent for the qualities which most essentially contribute to the honour and welfare of his country.

THE object of this search, which does not cross the eye at every glance, was seen with pleasure; and though the uses derived from it may be deemed presumptuous, I could not resist the desire of fixing so bright an ornament to my work; and of offering however slender, my tribute of applause to actions, which demand a distinguished page in the annals of our nation.

ILL Fortune, which from the day of ancient
ROME,

ROME, has been ordinarily followed by neglect, obscurity, and oftentimes disgrace, opened a more extensive field for the display of YOUR LORDSHIP'S endowments; and like the blasts of Winter on the rooted oak, hold out honourable testimony of superior strength.

IN the Eastern world, YOUR LORDSHIP has been opposed to an enemy far more formidable, — the possession of a power never before exercised by a British subject; not even committed to the first magistrate of our state; and which extends over a spacious region, a numerous and wealthy people. Yet, far removed from controul, in a land whose every principle of government is actuated by a rapacious avarice, whose people never approach the gate of authority without an offering, we have seen, and with wonder, the inflexible maintainance of an integrity, only to be equalled by a temperate use of command.

BUT, panegyrick being the least grateful where it is the most due, I will close this address, with a zealous wish, that YOUR LORDSHIP may yet
con-

continue to govern the British dominion in India, and complete the work that already hath assumed so fair an aspect. The sacrifice is great, but the reward is still greater; it will reach beyond the sovereign's bounty, or the peoples praise.

I have the Honour to be,

With the most profound respect,

MY LORD,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

Most devoted,

And most obedient

humble Servant,

GEORGE FORSTER.

CALCUTTA,

August the 1st, 1790.

P R E F A C E.

BOOKS of Voyages and Travels having been ever held in estimation, and indulgently received, I am the less fearful of submitting the following volume to the notice of the public. A knowledge of the manners of different nations qualifies domestic prejudice, and enlightens the mind ; but the subjects of Britain derive from it a singular benefit ; they see through a comparison that communicates a fond pleasure to the heart, the unrivaled excellency of their laws, constitution and government ; they see these rare gifts brightly reflected on their national character, which still avowedly maintains its pre-eminence amongst the nations of the European world. Were a man to form a judgment of the bias of

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his

his own genius and disposition, (on the merits of which he is, perhaps the least qualified to decide, (I would unreservedly say, that in the course of my journey, I felt no impulse of partiality for any sect or body of men. It is of serious concern to *letters*, that many a man of genius and science has fixed a discredit on his works, by a wilful adherence to some favourite system, which alluring to its standard a various train of affections, and ideas, he becomes involuntarily incited to sacrifice to it the principles of truth and reason.

TRAVELLERS stand accused, even, on proverbial authority, of adopting a figurative and loose style of description; and as I have been thrown into tracks, removed from the eye of European observation, I am prompted to earnestly solicit the confidence of the public in behalf of this work, and to say, that however vitiated by the errors of judgment, it has no tendency to discolour or misrepresent truth. The cursory dissertation on the former and present state of Bengal, may have some claim to favour, from the consideration that I visited that province in the description of a passenger;
through

though but a small portion of local knowledge might have been acquired, essential advantages arose from this temporary residence.

GUIDED by no views of interest, nor impressed by any frown of power, I was enabled to examine the objects that came before me through a dispassionate medium.

THE letter on the mythology of the Hindoos, some copies of which were published in 1785, has been corrected since my return to India; but from the various intricacy of the subject, I am apprehensive it may yet contain errors and apparent inconsistencies. Investigations of the religious ceremonies and customs of the Hindoos, written in the Carnatic, and in the Punjab, would in many examples widely differ; yet the Hindoo religion, in all parts of India, stand on a common basis; nor does the vast superstructure, when the view is inspected with attention, essentially differ in its compartments. The ostensible dissimilarity arises, perhaps from the manners of the same people, varying in Northern and Southern regions. A native of the lower Carnatic is mild,

temperate, and generally timid ; he performs the ordinances of his religion with a zealous and scrupulous attention ; and the bramin of that country, with many of the other sects, is confined strictly to the use of vegetable diet. How strong the contrast appears in the inhabitant of the Punjab ; those even of domestic and laborious professions, are brave, daring, and often cruel. Bramins are the usual soldiers of the country, many of whom eat flesh meat ; and they never leave their home, even when not employed in military service, without weapons of offence. The merchants and mechanicks, when they go but a few miles abroad, are all strongly armed ; and in some of the Northern provinces, particularly in Bundilcund, the husbandmen carry a spear into the field they are cultivating. This difference of disposition has produced opposite manners in the same tribes of people, as well as opposite customs, which if not attentively investigated, would afford a specious belief, that the inhabitants of the North and South of India were not connected by any national relation.

I HAVE to express with pleasure, great obligations to
Colonel

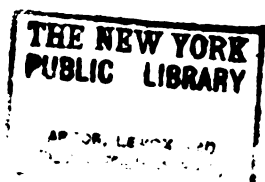
Colonel Polier, of the Honourable Company's service, for having furnished me with large historical tracts of the Sicques, and of the life of Shujah-ud-Dowlah. On every application to that gentleman for other information of Indian history, his papers and opinions have been liberally supplied. I am also much indebted to Mr. Bristow, of Bengal, for a valuable manuscript memoir of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, from which I have extracted curious and useful matter. The prefixed chart of the road, calculated according to the reckoning of my journal, was constructed by Mr. Wilford, of the Bengal corps of engineers, a gentleman of extensive geographical knowledge.

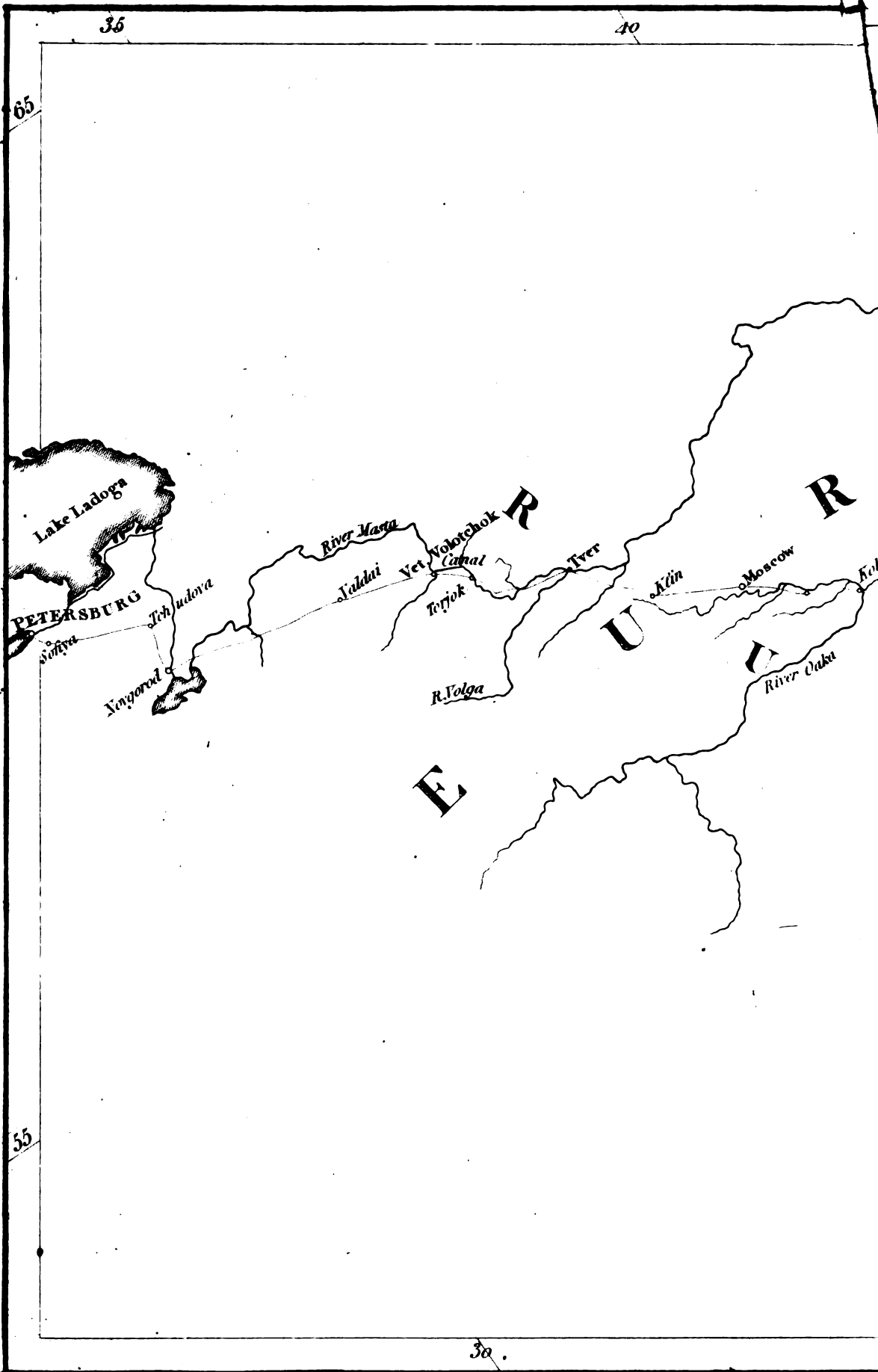
SCIENCE can receive but a slender aid from the materials of the following work. The manner in which I travelled, precluded the use of any instrument to ascertain the distance and bearings. The one I noted from observing the course of the sun; the other is agreeable to the common computation of the country, which is not often found widely erroneous. My limited knowledge of botany prevents, also, any accurate description of various classes

classes of trees and plants, which I saw in Kashmire and Persia. But the natural productions of those countries have been so scientifically treated by Chardin, Le Bruyn, and Bernier, that my inability will be the less sensibly felt.

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JAH-UD-DOWLAH, AND THE SICQUES.







A MAP
of the
ROUTE OF MR. FORSTER,
 from **LOLDONG** to
PETERSBURG,
in the Years
1783 and 1784.



FORSTER'S TRAVELS.

LETTER I.

Benares, 31st August, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

HAVING resolved on visiting Benares, that I might, there, indulge, for a short time, an investigation into the mythology of the Hindoos, I procured permission to proceed to that city ; and, as you may receive some amusement from the relation of my journey, with the observations that occurred, I will lay it before you ; intreating, that you will make the necessary allowance for a stranger*, who, though his remarks, and the con-

* The author is a civil servant on the Madras establishment.

clusions drawn, may partake of errors, will not, premeditatedly, discolour the truth.

ON the 23d of May, I left Calcutta, and on the next day arrived at Sookfagur, a valuable and rising plantation, the property of Messrs. Crofts and Lennox. These gentlemen have established, at this place, a fabrication of white cloth, of which the Company provide an annual investment, of about two lacks of rupees. They have also, founded a raw silk manufactory, which, as it bears the appearance of increase and improvement, will, I hope, reward the industrious and estimable labours of its proprietors. In this plantation, a large quantity of spirituous liquor is made, resembling, in an inferior degree, the American rum, which, since the commencement of the Dutch war, has become in great demand. Being applied to all the uses of the Batavia arrack, a considerable benefit is expected to arise to the Bengal province, from a current sale of this commodity. In justice to those who enrich their country by an introduction of valuable manufactures, the Government is called upon to yield them every protection, and grant them every fair indulgence ; it is, likewise, the duty of the man of observation, to circulate the success of such works, that an emulation may warm the breasts of his fellow citizens, and that those who project them, may receive the tribute of applause, due to genius and industry. It must not be omitted that this new establishment, hath been noticed by the particular attention of the Government of Bengal, which, on many other occasions, has evinced

evinced a zealous disposition, in encouraging and promoting useful undertakings.

THE English should no longer account themselves sojourners in this country; they are now, virtually, it's lords paramount, and their policy should not be that of a day; but, considering the opulence and wealth of the subject as closely tending to enrich the common state, they should, at large, support his wants, and encourage his labours. A conduct equally wise and profitable, would conduce to the increase of public, and private, prosperity, and operate as a compensatory retribution for some actions, which cannot bear the test of investigation; and which have, already, involved the national character in disgrace. In touching on this subject, I am necessarily led into reflections on the commerce of Bengal, interior and foreign, and on the common want of specie, throughout the province.

PREVIOUSLY to the æra in which the English became possessed of Bengal, the different nations who visited it were obliged to give specie for the greatest portion of the commodities they purchased; there being but a small proportion of articles taken in barter by the natives. This species of commerce, so lucrative to India, and which must have deposited a large amount of gold and silver, continued for upwards of a century and an half. But, after the English Government was established in Bengal, the necessity of this commercial system no longer existed; the amount of the revenues became sufficient to purchase the cargoes of the country, and to

defray the public expenditures : here, one channel of the influx of specie into Bengal was stopped, and it will be found, also, that the revolutions, which in that quarter, advanced the fortunes of the English, have materially lessened the like imports of the other European nations, who traded to Bengal. For, exclusively of finding a current sale for their commodities, they have been enabled to procure, from the English, large sums of money, for bills on Europe. An important change has been also effected on the interior commerce of Bengal, by the extinction of the Mahometan dominion.

THE native princes, and chiefs of a various description, the retainers of numerous dependants, afforded a constant employment to a vast number of ingenious manufacturers, who supplied their masters with gold and silver stuffs, curiously flowered, plain muslins, a diversity of beautiful silks, and other articles of Asiatic luxury ; the use of which, wealth, and a propensity to a voluptuous life, naturally excited. These Mahometan, or Hindoo, chiefs, have either been removed, or being no longer possessed of their former resource, have fallen into poverty and decay ; and the artizans, who had been supported in their professions by these powerful and wealthy masters, were, on their expulsion, obliged, from a want of subsistence, to quit their professions, or the country. Hence, many branches of rare manufacture, evidently declined ; and some of the most precious are now no longer known. The distracted and impoverished condition of the Moghul and Persian empires, hath contributed,

~~reduced~~, considerably, to lessen the great demand which was made by those states, for the produce of Bengal, when Dehli and Ispahan enjoyed reigns of grandeur and vigour. When it is considered, that the Moghul court, whether in it's splendour or wealth, exceeded that of all other nations ; that the numerous governors, interspersed throughout the provinces, adopted the manners of sovereign princes, and that all their more luxurious articles of dress were fabricated in Bengal ; we must conclude, that the discontinuation of such a traffic has produced strong effects. In describing this commercial event, which has brought an evident change in the quality of the trade of Bengal, I am not authorized, by any specific knowledge, to say, that a general injury has been felt by the country ; perhaps, the losses which have been sustained are counterpoised by the augmentation of the cargoes, though of a different species, which are now transported, annually, to Europe.

HAVING already noticed the large influx of European specie, or bullion, in this country, and the cause of the cessation of this traffic, I will offer some desultory sentiments, on the subject of the diminution of the coin in Bengal, of which, grievous complaints have long existed. During the Mahometan administration, private wealth was usually expended on the spot where it had been acquired ; and though severity and oppression might have been exercised in the accumulation, yet, by it's quick circulation, through the many channels of luxury, the country at large was improved and embellished, without any decrease of the general currency. It may

may be urged, that the expenditure of Europeans, in their public and private buildings, has, adequately, supplied the wants of the artizan and labourer. But, I am led to hazard an opinion, that this amount falls much short of that applied by the preceding princes to the construction of mosques, baths, Hindoo temples, grand reservoirs of water, spacious gardens, together with a variety of costly private edifices. These modes of expence are neither adapted to the genius, or inclination, of Europeans, who have no religious passion to gratify, nor are they impelled, by patriot zeal, to raise monuments of grandeur in India ; but holding themselves the moveable tenants of the day, they are eager to reach their native home, that they may there enjoy the fruits of their labour.

As the remittance of English property to Europe could not be sufficiently attained, by means of public bills, the servants of the Company, and private merchants, have been often driven to the necessity of exporting specie, though such a medium be attended with heavy loss ; or they are induced to throw their cash into foreign funds, whereby their enemies, or at least, their rivals, are enriched. The injurious tendency of this limitation of public remittance, having been so severely felt, and repeatedly represented to the superior Government in England, it is to be expected that the channel of conveying property from India, will be opened in so efficient a manner, that the necessity of pursuing, in future the destructive alternative of exporting gold and silver, or employing foreign agents, will be, wholly, obviated. As the private cash taken up in
India

India will be invested in Indian produce, and sent to Europe, for the express purpose of discharging the bills drawn ; the position is clear, excepting in the event of unforeseen calamity, that the sales of the cargoes, in Europe, will enable the East India Company to discharge the requisite payments. In testimony of the vast inherent resource of Bengal, it is necessary to observe, that the wealth of this province, which has supported, by its millions, the Coromandel and Malabar coasts, foreign and domestic wars, and the trade of China and Bencoolen, must have been accumulated in the space of sixty or seventy years.

FROM the period of Arungzebe's death,* until nearly the date of our territorial establishments in India, when the Moghul Empire still preserved a large possession of its power, the balance of the revenues of Bengal, was punctually conveyed, in specie and † Bills, to the Imperial treasury. The remittance of this amount has been known to cause so great a scarcity of money, that many persons, possessed of even large property, have incurred difficulties, in defraying their domestic expences. Though the maritime commerce of Bengal does not maintain the vigor which accompanied it, whilst the Europeans were confined to the coasts of India, and exercised simply the profession of merchants, a brisk and important trade is yet carried on at Calcutta. The advantageous traffic that sub-

* This Prince died, A. D. 1707.

† A crore, of rupees, or million sterling, has been sent in the course of one year, from Bengal to Delai.

fisted

lifted formerly between this port and Pegue, Siam, and the Malay islands, now feebly remains ; and, unless some favourable change is speedily effected, bears the appearance of a total failure. Though these branches of commerce, silver bullion, gold-dust and precious stones, were introduced into Bengal ; from whence, in return raw and wrought silks, coarse cotton cloths, opium, and salt petre, were exported. It hath also been alledged, that, within these late years, the maritime trade of Bengal has received a check from an embargo, or, what is tantamount, an excessive high duty laid on the importation of foreign salt. This restriction has reduced the number of ships, and lessened the considerable exportation of grain, which, before that period, annually took place at the port of Calcutta : yet, though it may have injured the exterior commerce, the revenue of the Ganges salt has been increased, by this restriction, to an amount never produced at any former period. It is painful, perhaps not just, to expatiate on the defects, or the misfortunes of a country, and hold them out to public view ; without proposing remedies for the ills that are exhibited. The scantiness of my local knowledge, will only permit me to say, that as the welfare of the British dominion in India, ultimately depends on the prosperity of Bengal, no labour should be thought irksome, no rational plan left untried, which may improve its revenue, or encourage its trade.

ON the 29th of May I arrived at Berhampore. In this cantonment, which is large and commodious, are stationed three regiments of sepoy, and a battalion of Europeans. On the 15th of June,

June, made an excursion to Mooreshedabad, and its environs, that I might view the theatre on which those interesting schemes had been agitated, which, after a series of intrigue and blood-shed, advanced the English to the dominion of a wealthy kingdom.

At the distance of a mile below the city, and on the opposite bank of the river, stands the burying place of Ali Verdy Khan, known also in India by the name of Mahobut Jung; a man, who, by his abilities as a soldier and a statesman, raised himself from a private condition, to the Subahdarry of Bengal. He maintained an obstinate war with the Mahrattas, for the space of eight years, and was, after an obstinate struggle, obliged to cede to them the districts of Kuttack.

Not far from the tomb of Mahobut Jung, lies interred his nephew, Seraje-ud-Dowlah, well known in English history, by his capture of Fort William, and afterwards, confining the unfortunate garrison in a close dungeon; where most of them died from the severity of their situation. The fate of this young man was similar to that of many an Eastern Prince; of such, especially, who experience a reverse of fortune.—Seraje-ud-Dowlah was betrayed by Meer Jaffier, at the battle of Plassey, and assassinated a short time after, by his order. Were the conduct of Meer Jaffier to be tried by the law of natural affections, or by the rules of private honor, it must appear tainted with a die of deep hue. Mahobut Jung, thinking to secure to his successor the attachment of Meer Jaffier, bestowed on this officer, the highest office of Government,

with his sister in marriage ; and on his death bed, in the most earnest manner, delivered the young Nabob to his tutelage and protection. Mahobut Jung should have known, from successful experience,* that no ties are sufficiently coercive to restrain the wild force of ambition ; particularly that species of it found in an Asiatic breast, which is seen to break down every fence.

THE Mollahs, who are employed here to offer up their prayers for the dead, said, that the widow of Seraje-ud-Dowlah, frequently comes to this mausoleum, and performs certain ceremonies of mourning, in memory of her deceased husband. Mooreshedabad, which now bears the various marks of poverty and decay, an evident result of the removal of the seat of Government, is a city of no old date ; as the residence of the subahs of Bengal, who, not many years ago, kept their court at Rajah Mhal, about one hundred miles further up the river. The present Subahdar, Mubarick-ud-Dowlah, grandson of Meer Jaffier, and son of the Nabob Mirun, who was said to have been killed by lightening, receives an annual stipend of sixteen lacks of rupees, from the Company's treasury : having never been vested with the power, or possessed of an aspiring temper, he is the less restless, in his present situation. As the British nation, in the acquisition of their possessions in Bengal, have been materially aided, by the family of Mubarick-ud-Dowlah, they should not, from any narrow scheme of œconomy, recede

* He had made a successful use, in his attainment of power, of the various instruments of intrigue and treachery.

from.

from their engagements with this prince, who, though flattered by the most indulgent attention, must still have mortifying moments, unless he is wholly bereft of the sense of feeling, or the faculty of reflection. No buildings of note are seen in the city of Mooreshedabad: that which most attracts the attention, is the cemetery of Meer Jaffier, his begum, and the Nabob Mherun :* few things are more efficacious, in repressing or mocking vanity, of which affliction so ample a share has fallen to our lot, than, dispassionately, to view the repository of those who in their lives have been termed great men, who, "before they shuffled off this mortal coil," inflamed by pride, avarice, ambition, thought empires too narrow for their scope, and that mankind were only created to become the instruments of their mad desires: these once towering creatures, are now, per force, lodged in very moderate apartments, where their turbulent schemes sleep in quiet, and their names are often buried in their ashes.—A tomb is one of those few appendages of a great man, in the possession of which none envy him.

On the 23d of June, I embarked in a boat at Mooreshedabad, and with a fresh easterly wind, sailed up the river about 30 miles. The boatmen, generally Hindoos, fasten the boat to the shore in the evening, that they may eat and refresh themselves; it not being the usage of their sect to prepare victuals on the water.

* I have been also informed that Mherun was interred at Rajemhal. It is not usual among the Mahometans to erect cenotaphs.

24th.—I saw the village of Jungypore on the eastern shore, where the Company have established a factory, for the manufacture of raw-silk. This day our course was about twenty miles.

25th.—Entered the main branch of the Ganges : — here the river affords a spacious view, which is terminated, at the extremity of a long reach, by a vista of the hills above Rajah Mhal, extending, in a regular chain, to the north-west. The Ganges, which at Sooty,* is full four miles across, was that day roughly agitated by a strong wind, which heaving the waters into a short breaking wave, gave it the appearance of an arm of the sea. The riches of Bengal, with a large portion of the conveniency of it's inhabitants, are, in an essential degree, derived from this river, which, with its numerous branches flowing through and intersecting an extensive space of country, transports speedily, and at a moderate expence, the various product of districts, towns, and villages, to places, where they are immediately consumed, or collected for the supply of more distant marts. The Ganges also affords a grand aid to the English, in all military operations within their own territory ; whilst their armies on the Coromandel and Malabar Coasts, are, from a want of provisions and ammunition, cramped and impeded in their motions ; and are frequently, for the obtainment of these supplies, compelled to retreat, on the moment of reaping the full fruits of victory. But, the Bengal armaments are furnished, from their store boats,

* A village near the head of the Cassimbazar river.

with

with every equipment ; and the Europeans enjoy, in their camps, even the luxuries of life.

IN the evening, arrived at Rajah Mhal, a former residence of some of the Bengal subahdars. Ali Verdy Khan, in the beginning of his administration, which commenced in 1742, removed the seat of Government from this place to Mooreshedabad. I could not learn the cause of this preference ; although not deficient in enquiry. The natives of India, are not much addicted to curious investigation, and are generally inattentive to the history of their own country. It would seem that their chief happiness is centered, in enjoying the present hour, which absorbs every retrospect of the past, and care of the future. Their pleasures are even indolent and languid, and partake of the mild influence of their climate, and the easy produce of a fertile soil. Ali Verdy Khan probably removed his capital to Moorshedabad, that he might keep a more vigilant watch over the actions of the English, whom, it was said, he feared ; and also more conveniently prosecute the war against the Mahrattas, who had invaded his country, on the side of the Kuttack. Rajah Mhal bears at this day an impoverished aspect ; and were it not for the heaps of ruins interspersed through the town and its environs, which have now mouldered into a state of deep decay, it would be difficult to discover, that this place had been, so lately, the principal city of a powerful and opulent chief. Sauntering amongst the ruined building, I strayed into a small garden adjoining the bank of the river ; where perceiving an old man, employed

employed in digging, I entered into a conversation with him. Happening to be more intelligent than the common class, and agreeably to the period of his life, very narrative, he afforded me much amusement in his relation and remarks. This old Cicerone observed, that the very spot which he was then cultivating, was the site of the Nobet Ghah ; or the music-hall of the old palace ; and that within his recollection, a capacious garden had extended in front of his little inclosure, which the Ganges had now swept away. The instability of the monuments of human grandeur cannot, in any region of the globe, I apprehend, be more faithfully, or more grievously exemplified than at Rajah Mhal ; yet I must exclude from this range of ruins the convenient and hospitable house of Mr. Cleveland, which formed a part of the Subahdar's palace.

ON the 26th, passed, with a fresh easterly wind, the village of Sickergully, (where a heavy swell had nearly overfet the boat) and observed near it a neat building, which had been erected by Mr. Cleveland, for the accomodation of passengers.

27th.—Saw the town of Pointee, near which, on an eminence, stands an Hindoo, or Mahometan mansion ; and a mosque, now apparently in disuse. Adjacent to these buildings, a monument has been raised to the memory of a Mr. Middleton, who died there, on his journey to Calcutta : these objects would not prehaps deserve notice, did they not present picturesque land-marks.

28th.—the wind being light, and the current strong, the men
were

were obliged to track the boat. These two last days we proceeded only about thirty miles. An evident danger is incurred by approaching the banks of the Ganges during the latter season of the rain, from their frequently falling, being of great height in many places, and chiefly composed of loose soil, the weight of earth descending on a boat, would undoubtedly destroy it.

29th.—At noon, arrived at Jungherah, a small rocky island, on which stands a seminary of Hindoo mendicants, and on one of the sides are seen some figures of very ancient sculpture. A long line of hills, running from the south-east to the north-west, forms here a beautiful termination of a broad range of the river. It has been said, that Seraje-ud-Dowlah was assassinated at Jungherah, whither he had fled for shelter from the pursuit of Meer Jaffier; but it should seem more probable, that he was apprehended near this place, and carried to Mooreshedabad.

THIS day, observed the frame of a well, built of bricks, that stood in the middle of the stream, with its wall in perfect condition, full fifteen feet above the surface of the water. It must have pertained to some village, bordering on the Ganges; now destroyed by the encroachment of its flood.

PROCEEDED this day, about 35 miles, and in the evening, saw Mongheer, where I arrived the next day. The fort is in a decayed condition, as well as the private buildings, which are uninhabited. The situation, which occupies a flat of great extent towards the westward, and has the Ganges on the north, is equally well chosen for

for defence, and conveniency. One of the angle bastions commands a beautifully winding view of the river, which is closed by a range of distant hills. It appears that the present fort of Mongheer was built by Sultan Shujah, the second son of Shah Jehan,* who governed the provinces of Bahar and Bengal, and was held in high estimation by the natives, for his liberality and equitable administration. As some relation of Sultan Shujah, (especially of the latter period of his life, which was involved in a series calamity) may excite your attention, and enable me to offer up a tribute of pity to the memory of an unfortunate, but gallant, prince, I will lay it before you, agreeably to the memoirs of M. Bernier, one of the most accurate and ingenious writers, on the history of Hindostan.

AFTER the battle of Alhabad, in which he had been worsted, Sultan Shujah retired into the interior parts of Bengal, with his army, where he made a vigorous stand against the arms of the Emperor.† Bernier says, “ There remained, now, no other thorn in
“ the side of Aurungzebe, than Sultan Shujah, who still main-
“ tained himself in Bengal; but he was at length forced to yield
“ to the power and fortune of his brother.

“ AMIR Kumla,‡ by the numerous bodies of troops that had

* This Prince caused a broad and deep trench to be cut from the river to the hills, very (perceptible traces of which are now to be seen) for the more effectually defending this post against the attack of Aurungzebe's army, which had pursued him from the upper parts of the country.

† Aurungzebe.

‡ The Officer commanding the expedition against Sultan Shujah.

“ joined

“ joined him, was enabled to hem in the army of Sultan Shujah,
 “ on both sides of the Ganges, and to compel that prince to seek
 “ refuge at Dacca, a town situate on the extremity of Bengal, to-
 “ wards the sea side ; and here, ensues the conclusion of the tragedy.
 “ The Sultan Shujah, being destitute of ships to put to sea, and
 “ not knowing whither to fly, sent his eldest son, Sultan Banque,
 “ to the King of Racan,* or Mug, who was of Heathen religion,
 “ to know, whether he might be permitted to take shelter in his
 “ country, for a certain time, and when the monsoon, or periodi-
 “ cal winds should set in, whether he could be furnished with a
 “ vessel, to carry him to Mecca, from whence he intended passing
 “ into some part of Turkey, or Persia. Sultan Banque returned to
 “ Dacca, with some galleasses, manned, with Feringhis, I mean, those
 “ fugitive Portuguese christians, who had entered into the service of
 “ the King of Racan, and were employed in no other business
 “ than ravaging the lower parts of Bengal. The young man re-
 “ porting to his father, that he had been kindly received, and had
 “ full assurances of protection, and assistance given him ; Sultan
 “ Shujah, with his family, consisting of three sons, daughters, and
 “ their, mother, embarked at Dacca. On their arrival at Racan,
 “ they were treated with much civility, and provided with such
 “ necessaries, requisite for their subsistence, as the country afford-
 “ ed ; in the name of the King. Some months pass away, the

* More commonly known by the name of Aracan.

“ season of the favorable winds also approach, but no mention is
“ made of the vessel, though the Sultan required it, on no other
“ terms than the payment of the hire, for he, yet, wanted not ru-
“ pees of gold and silver, or gems.—He had, indeed, too great a
“ plenty of them, his wealth being, in all appearance, the cause of
“ his ruin, or at least, contributing much to it. This prince
“ might long enough have solicited for a ship; all was in vain; he
“ effected nothing.—On the contrary, the King began to shew
“ great coldness, and to complain of his not coming to see him.
“ I know not whether Sultan Shujah thought it unworthy of
“ himself, and too great a condescension to visit this King; or
“ rather, whether, he feared, that being in the power of their
“ chief, his person might be seized on, for the purpose of plunder-
“ ing his treasure, and that he himself might be delivered into the
“ hands of Amir Kumla, who had offered, in the name of Au-
“ rungzebe, large sums of money, with other considerable advan-
“ tages, for obtaining the possession of this unfortunate family.

“ WHATEVER might have been the cause, Sultan Shujah did
“ not go thither, but sent his eldest son; who, on approaching
“ the dwelling of the King, began to display his liberality to the
“ people, by throwing amongst them a considerable quantity of
“ rupees of gold and silver, and when he came before the King, he
“ presented him with rich embroideries, and rare pieces of gold-
“ smith's work, set with precious stones of great value; excusing
“ at the same time, on account of some illness, his father, in
“ whose

“ whose name he had now to entreat, that the ship, which had
 “ been promised, might be held in readiness. But, all that the
 “ Prince had done, had not advanced his business ; on the con-
 “ trary, this King, in the course of five or six days after, made a
 “ demand of one of the daughters of Sultan Shujah, in marriage;
 “ in which the father resolving never to acquiesce, the King be-
 “ came highly offended.

“ Sultan Shujah seeing the season for sailing had passed away,
 “ and perceiving the situation in which he was then placed was a
 “ desperate one, determined on pursuing equally desperate mea-
 “ sures, and undertook the performance of an action, which may
 “ afford a great example of the efforts of despair. Although this
 “ King of Racan, in his religion, is a Pagan, there are many
 “ Mahometans, mixed with the people, who have either chosen to
 “ retire amongst them, or have been enslaved by the Portuguese
 “ before mentioned, in their expeditions to the neighbouring
 “ coasts. Sultan Shujah secretly gained these men, whom he
 “ joined with two or three hundred of his own own people; the
 “ remainder of those who followed him from Bengal ; and with
 “ this force he resolved to surprize the house of the King, put his
 “ family to the sword, and make himself sovereign of the country.
 “ This bold attempt, which resembled more the enterprize of a
 “ desperado, than that of a prudent man, yet, had, from the in-
 “ telligence I collected from many Mussalmen, Portuguese, and
 “ Hollanders, who were then on the spot, a certain feasibility in

“ it. But the day before the blow was to be given, a discovery
“ was made of the design, which altogether ruined the affairs of
“ Sultan Shujah, and involved in it the destruction of his family.
“ For, after this failure, having no further hope of retrieving his
“ fortune, he endeavoured to escape into Pegu ; a purpose, in a
“ manner impossible to be effected, by reason of the vast moun-
“ tains and forests that lay in the way ; besides, they pursued him
“ so closely, that he was overtaken, the same day on which he
“ fled. It may be well imagined, that Sultan Shujah defended
“ himself, with the most obstinate courage. The number of Bar-
“ barians that fell under his sword will scarcely be credited ; but
“ at length, overpowered by the multitude of his enemies, he
“ was forced to quit the combat. Sultan Banque, who had not
“ advanced as far as his father, fought like a lion, until covered
“ with the blood of the wounds he received from the stones, that
“ had been showered upon him from all sides, he was seized on,
“ and carried away, with his mother, two young brothers, and
“ his sisters. All that could be learned of the fate of Sultan Shu-
“ jah, himself, was, that, accompanied by one woman, an eunuch,
“ and two other persons, he ascended the top of a mountain ;
“ that he was wounded on the head with a stone, which struck
“ him down ; but that the eunuch having bound up the wound,
“ with his own turban, he arose again, and escaped into the midst
“ of the woods. This relation I have heard recounted in many
“ different ways, by those even that were on the spot, which gave
“ rise

“rise to a variety of reports of this Prince, and spread frequent alarms at the court of Delhi.”

THIS writer, after giving a detail of the many conjectures, that were formed of the fate of Sultan Shujah, mentions, that he travelled from Bengal to Masulipatam, with an eunuch of that Prince, and his former commandant of artillery, who told him that Sultan Shujah was dead, but observed a strict reserve in communicating any farther information. Mr. Bernier supposes, that if Sultan Shujah was not slain, on the place of action, he must have died, soon after; falling either into the hands of robbers, or a prey to the wild beasts, with which the forests of that country abound.

SUBSEQUENTLY to this event, the remaining branches of the family were thrown into prison, where they were treated with much rudeness; but after some time, Bernier says, they received a milder treatment, which was chiefly caused by the marriage of the eldest daughter of Sultan Shujah, with the King of Racan. The sequel of this event sets forth, that the servants of the Sultan Banque were discovered in forming another conspiracy, with those Mahometans, who have been already noticed, and that the King being now violently exasperated against this unfortunate family, ordered it to be extirpated; nor did any branch remain, excepting the Princess, whom he had espoused.*

CASSUM

* I have been the more induced to insert this relation of the fate of Sultan Shujah, as it places the conclusion of a curious historical passage, in a point of view, different from

CASSUM Ali Khan, in the last years of his government, retired to the fort of Mongheer, and actuated by a keen resentment against the English, for their extensive encroachments on his authority, and the commerce of his country, he formed the plan of throwing off their yoke, and annihilating their influence in Bengal. In addition to these motives, he was urgently incited to the attempt by the officers of his court and army, who were necessarily alarmed at the diminution of their power and lucrative appointments. Amongst the foremost of these, we find the Armenian Khojah Gregore, who, contrary to the usage of his country-men, had assumed the profession of arms, and had risen to high rank and confidence, in the service of Cassum Ali. He seems, with Sumroo, to have borne a principal part in the war against the English, which ultimately involved, as is well known, the ruin of Cassum, and the destruction of the Mahometan dominion in Bengal. Gregore also lost his life, for on a suspicion of intriguing with the Armenians of Calcutta he was cut off, previously to the expulsion of his master. With Cassum Ali * ended, virtually, the power of the subahdars

from that described by a late writer (Col. Dow) on the Empire of Hindoostan; who, however well-founded his claims to accuracy, could not have attained the possession of more authentic documents, than a person, who was himself brought forward into the action of the day, and whose writings for the space of more than 100 years, have borne the test of truth.

* Cassum Ali Khan, after wandering about the upper provinces, and soliciting the aid of various chiefs against the English, sought protection at the Court of Dehli. He evinced the same intriguing and sanguinary disposition in domestic life, as had marked his

subahdars of Bengal. Meer Jaffier, in his last administration, made a feeble attempt to resume his authority, but it soon terminated in his death, and in leaving the English the supreme rulers of an extensive and valuable territory.

I should be ill intitled to a place, even amongst the most trite observers, did I not, before I quitted this part of the country, throw my mite into the fund of general applause which has been bestowed on Mr. Cleveland. This gentleman, whom I never saw, but whose works loudly proclaim his merit, and diffuse his praise, has by an equitable and judicious management of the Rajah Mhal and Bauglepour districts, considerably increased the number of inhabitants, and improved, as well as facilitated, the collection of the revenue. The increase of population is conspicuously seen in the dependency of Mongheer, and in the extensive mercats of that place, which are resorted to by a concourse of various traders. He hath also made strenuous exertions, in drawing the adjacent Mountaineers, from their fastnesses to the plains. Nor have his labours failed of success. Twelve hundred of these men have entered into our service, and are embodied in a corps, which bears the appearance of becoming useful to the state. The indulgent

his public character. He endeavoured, it is said, to supplant the Minister at Dehli, by an offer of a large donation to the King; and he is accused of murdering, at different times, the women he carried with him from Bengal. At his death, which happened at the village of Kutwall, in 1777, the Court seized on his estate, the value of which was computed at *one thousand pounds*;—a small residue of the plunder of Bengal and Bahar!

treatment

treatment shewn them with the superior advantages, which they derive, must operate as powerful inducements to their brethren, in following so profitable an example. The depredations of these people had, at former periods, rendered the passage of the roads in that quarter so unsafe, that escorts were stationed at certain posts, for the protection of travellers; and detachments of two and three battalions, have occasionally been sent against the savage inhabitants of the Banglepour hills; who are now become the guardians of a country, which they had long wasted, by rapine and bloodshed.

Mr. Cleveland has established small buildings, at most of the halting places within his districts, for the accommodation of travellers; and the natives of those parts, who seem to have profited by the conduct of their chief, are peculiarly attentive to strangers. Such have been the advantages, which the state, and a body of people have derived, from the public spirit, and the benevolent efforts of one man! But his reward hath been bounteous and complete. He hath enjoyed the honour of exalting, in a distant land, the character of his nation, and felt sensations which transport the mind beyond the reach of fortune.

On the 3d of July, I left Mongheer; and arrived, on the 5th, at Patna, by water. This city is spacious and populous, though much fallen from the importance it held, during the residence of the Subahdar of Bahar. The great quantity of poppies cultivated in the contiguous districts, from which opium of an excellent quality

quality is produced, together with extensive salt-petre works, have rendered Patna opulent, and the center of an extensive commerce. The different manufactures of silver, iron, and wood, are little inferior in this city, to those of Europe; and when the rudeness of the tools, with the simplicity of the process, is examined, the degree of delicacy which the artisans have acquired in their several professions, must challenge a high admiration.

The numerous ruins of public and private edifices, scattered through the town of Patna, and its environs, indicate a former grandeur and extent, which now no longer exist. An ancient name of this place, still known to some of the more intelligent inhabitants, and bearing an affinity to that given, by Strabo and Pliny, to the supposed capital of India, has suggested an opinion, that Patna occupies the situation of the celebrated Palibothra; which is farther substantiated by the geographical observations of Major Rennel.—Curiosity, and the desire of the moment to indulge a melancholy idea, led me to the spot, where the English were massacred by the order of Cassim Ali. The former buildings are removed, and a well proportioned monument has been erected in commemoration of that dreadful event, though without any inscription. Perhaps it had been consistent with sounder policy, that no such memorial had been fixed; but as it was judged expedient to record, thus publicly, an act of treacherous cruelty, the cause, I think, should have been explained.

On the 13th of July, I left Patna, and on the same day arrived

VOL. I.

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at Muzufferpour, the residence of the Collector of Tirhoot, an extensive district, about forty miles to the northward of Patna, and producing a revenue of about six and a half lacks of rupees.

IN the neighbourhood of Muzufferpour, an action was fought in 1760, between Mherim, the eldest son of Meer Jaffier, assisted by the English troops, and Kadim Hussain Khan, the chief of Purnea, in which the latter was defeated. A few days after the engagement, Mherim died, struck, it was said, by lightning. The father believed that his son had been cut off by an assassin, and he loudly accused Cassum Ali of the murder. The event having removed a strong bar to Cassum's ambition, and there also appearing some suspicious circumstances, attending the alledged cause of his death, Meer Jaffier may be justified in believing, that his son had been taken off, by an avowed rival, who was seen at a subsequent period, indulging an implacable and sanguinary temper.

On the 30th of July, crossed the country, and went to Choprah, a long straggling town, lying on the northern side of the Ganges, about twenty miles above Patna. Choprah is the residence of the Collector of Sarun and Champoran; districts yielding an annual revenue of fourteen and an half lacks of rupees. The French and Dutch had * factories at this place, chiefly for the purpose of manufacturing salt-petre, in which commodity this part of

* This letter was written during the war with France and Holland, when these places had been captured by the English.

the country profusely abounds. It is not unworthy of notice to remark, that the Dutch, though obliged to purchase the greater portion of their crude salt-petre from the English, were enabled to sell it in its purified state, at a lower rate than that manufactured by the English Company, and of a superior quality. This commercial advantage, may be ascribed to the rigid system of œconomy observed by the Dutch in all their operations, and to a persevering attention to business, with which that people seem constitutionally endowed.

ON the 12th of August, left Choprah, and on the 17th arrived by water at Buxar. It was in the vicinity of this place that Cassim Ali, joined by Shujah-ud-Dowlah, with the whole of that Prince's army, made his last effort against the arms of the English. The superior numbers of the enemy who crowded the plains of Buxar, availed them little, when opposed to the small, but well arranged, and determined body of the English; who after a smart action of two hours, completely routed the combined forces, and captured the whole of their artillery. This action, heretofore so amply described, had not perhaps now been adverted to, but for the impulse of an earnest desire of imprinting anew on your memory, the services performed on that day by the British troops; to whom their country stands indebted for a singular exaltation of its fame, and the acquisition of solid benefits.

THE fort of Buxar, which, though small, is yet sufficiently tenable to resist the common attacks of a native power, stands

on the exterior limits of the Bahar province. The present Commandant has added to the strength of the fort by some late improvements; and for a more extensive protection of the inhabitants of the adjacent town, he has encompassed a wide space to the eastward of the fortifications, with a rampart and ditch.

THE curiosities to be seen at Buxar are few, and, excepting one, not worthy of enumeration. But this one, the Hindoos hold in a degree of estimation not inferior to that of the Neapolitans for the blood of Saint Januarius, or those of their faith in general for the holy house at Loretto. The monument in question, which is erected on a small mount to the westward of the fort, is sacred to the memory of the Gold Ram, who is seen occasionally officiating as the Mars of the Hindoos; and is said to have the direction of war and victory. It would appear, that Ram, whilst a youth, made a visit to this eminence, and tarried on it for the space of seven days, where he was taught from some learned master of the science, the art of managing the bow, and wonderful were his feats with this weapon in after times: indeed, were the most moderate of them to be recorded, it would be readily admitted without torturing the phrase, that Ram "drew a long bow."

AT the distance of two miles to the westward of Buxar, the Torin Nullah, a rivulet which falls into the Ganges, terminates the province of Bahar, and divides it from Benares. Though the Caramnassa river, from being of greater note than the Nullah,
and

and running contiguous to it, is generally denominated the boundary. In crossing this river on service, the officers on the Bengal establishment become intitled to a double portion of their usual pay, for the better enabling them to defray the extraordinary expences incurred in countries far distant from the sea coasts, and where European articles, from the charges of conveyance, sell at an advanced price.

THE view from Buxar into the Benares province, presents a scene of infinite gratification to the sense. You see an extended plain skirted by a broad winding river, and chequered with exuberant fields of corn, groves of lofty spreading trees, and large villages; the whole combines in it some of the grandest objects in nature, and impresses the mind with cheerfulness and content.

LEFT Buxar on the 23d, and arrived on the 26th at Benares, to which city from Mongheer, the distance by water is about 280 miles.

IN the relation of this failing excursion through the provinces, you will doubtless see many inaccuracies. You will likewise see that I have too narrowly circumscribed the description of a country, which with a fertility that conveys the idea of plenty, and national security, holds out to the eye, a grand and various scope of the most beautiful imagery.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LET-

LETTER II.

Benares, 30th September, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

HAVING given you a cursory detail of my journey from Calcutta to Benares, with the remarks that occurred; I will now lay before you the result of my enquiries and observations at this place. Should errors arise in the investigation of a subject, hitherto slightly discussed, and, from its extensive variety, perplexed and abstruse, I must entreat an indulgent eye; and though mistaken in my opinions, I presume to hope for some commendation, were it only for endeavouring to administer a rational pleasure.

THE city of Benares, for its wealth, costly buildings, and the number of its inhabitants, is classed in the first of those now remaining in the possession of the Hindoos. To describe with a due degree of precision the various temples dedicated at Benares, to the almost innumerable deities, and to explain the origin of their foundation with the necessary arrangement, would require a knowledge far superior to mine in the mysterious subject of Hindoo Mythology. It is at this day enveloped in such
deep

deep obscurity, that even those pundits the most skilfully versed in the Sanscrit,* are not able to render it moderately comprehensible to the generality of people.

BUT as some relation of a city so famous in Hindoostan, and now so well known in Europe for supplying one of the grand sources of the religious worship of the Hindoos, and being the chief repository of the science yet existing among them, may not be unacceptable to you, together with a cursory investigation of the Mythology of Brimha, the task shall be attempted with attention to the object, and, I trust, with a strict adherence to truth.

AT the distance of eight miles from the city of Benares, as it is approached on the river, from the eastward, the eye is attracted by the view of two lofty minarets, which were erected by Aurungzebe, on the foundation of an ancient Hindoo temple, dedicated to the Mhah Deve. The construction on this sacred ruin of so towering a Mahometan pile, which from its elevated height, seems to look down with triumph and exultation on the fallen state of a city so profoundly revered by the Hindoos, would appear to have been prompted to the mind of Arungzebe, by a bigotted and intemperate desire of insulting their religion. If such was his wish, it hath been completely fulfilled. For the Hindoos

* The language in which the sacred legends of the Hindoos have been preserved.

consider

consider this monument, as the disgraceful record of a foreign yoke, proclaiming to every stranger, that their favorite city has been debased, and the worship of their gods defiled. From the top of the minarets is seen the entire prospect of Benares, which occupies a space of about two miles and an half along the northern bank of the Ganges, and generally a mile in-land from the river. Many of the houses, which are remarkably high, some of them having six and seven floors, are built of stone, resembling that species found in the quarries of Portland,* and which abounds in this part of the country. But the streets where these lofty buildings stand, are so narrow as not to admit of two common carriages abreast. In addition to the pernicious effect which must proceed from a confined atmosphere, there is in the hot season, an intolerable stench arising from the many pieces of stagnated water dispersed in different quarters of the town, whose waters and borders are appropriated to the necessary uses of the inhabitants. The filth also, which is indiscriminately thrown into the streets, and there left exposed, (for the Hindoos possess but a small portion of general cleanliness), add to the compound of ill smells, so offensive to the European inhabitants of this city. The irregular and compressed manner which has been invariably adopted in forming the streets of Benares, has destroyed the effects which symmetry and arrange-

* The Benares or Chunar-Ghur stone, is closer grained and deeper coloured, than that of Portland.

ment

ment would have otherwise bestowed on a city, intitled from its valuable buildings, to a preference of any capital which I have seen in India.

IN my research into the principles of the Hindoo religion, I received great aid from a conversant knowledge of the Marhatta language, and an acquaintance, though very trivial, with the Sanscrit. The use of this last tongue, now chiefly confined to a particular sect of Bramins, who officiate in the character of priests, hath ever been made the channel of conveying to the Hindoos, the essential tenets of their religion, with all the various forms of their worship. The Sanscrit is a sonorous language, abounding in pith and conciseness; and its periods flow with boldness, and terminate in a cadence peculiarly musical. An extract of a floke, or stanza, which has been quoted by Mr. Halhed, is a striking testimony of the nervous composition, and the laconic turn of the Sanscrit. Being composed of only four lines, I will insert it, and endeavour to give the translation literally, and in verse.

Pētāche	—	rēnērvān	—	shētrōō,
Father	—	in debt	—	enemy.
Mātāh	—	shētrōō	—	rēshēlēnēe,
Mother	—	enemy	—	extravagant, or immoral.
Bhāriah	—	rūpērvūttee	—	shētrōō,
Wife	—	beautiful	—	enemy.
Pōōtrē	—	shētrōō	—	n'pūndītāh,
Son	—	enemy	—	unlearned.

The Mother who hath lost her fame,
 The Sire profuse and foe to shame,
 Are to their race a pest :
 A Bride's soft joys oft' thorns implant,
 And he who roams in Folly's haunt,
 Destroys his Father's rest.

THE Hindoos believe in one God, without beginning and without end, on whom they bestow, descriptive of his powers, a variety of epithets. But the most common appellation, and which conveys the sublimest sense of his greatness, is, Sree Mun Nar-rain.* The Hindoos, in their supplication to the Deity, address him as endowed with the three attributes of omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience, which in the Sanscrit are expressed by the terms, Neerangin, Neerakar, and Neergoon. Though these

* There is reason to believe, that in the more early periods of time, before the priests of the Hindoos had found it expedient, for the firmer establishment of their sway over the minds of the people, to raise a huge superstructure of emblematical worship, the temples erected to the Supreme Being were plain, and void of personification; the remains of one of these are now to be seen on the summit of a hill, near the city of Kashmire; which, according to tradition, had been dedicated to the Creator of the world; in which the prayers of those who entered, were addressed to the Deity without supplicating the intercession of an intermediate agent, and where no image, or symbol of Divine power, had a place. A gentleman of curious research on the coast of Coromandel, informed me, that at Chilamberum, about 20 miles to the southward of Cudalore, he saw a religious Hindoo edifice, plain, and without any interior figure, which was devoted to the worship of "the Invisible God," and was never approached but with tokens of profound awe and reverence.

terms

terms may not in literary strictness, comprise the precise meaning of the English text, they convey it virtually, and in the amplest sense. The Hindoos likewise believe, that the Supreme Deity possesses a three-fold form, the parts of which are said to be separate. It is composed of Sree Mun Narrain, who is supposed to represent a human form; the Alhah Letchinry, described as a beautiful woman; and a serpent, on which the Deity is seated. This emblematical assemblage, a symbol of strength, love, and wisdom, according to the Hindoo faith, is wholly spiritual, and is never represented in their temples by any object of matter: they say it is indivisible, and of infinite space.*

In the beginning, the Hindoos believe that the Deity created three men, to whom he gave the names of Brimha, Vyshnow, and Shevah.† To the first was committed the power of creating mankind;—to the second of cherishing them;—and to the third, that of restraining, correcting, and destroying them.‡ Brimha at one breath formed the human kind out of the four elements, amongst which he infused, if I understand the interpretation, and may be allowed the term, a vacuum.§

Before

* Perhaps the mysterious Tryad of Plato, who made a free use of Eastern knowledge, may have been formed from Indian materials.

† Called also Eishaver, and the Mhah Deve.

‡ In the capacity of Mhah Deve, he is denominated "The Destructive Power."

§ The word in the Sanscrit language, is *akasha*, the proper signification of which,

BEFORE the creation of man, Sree Mun Narrain formed the world out of a perplexed aggregation of matter, which had been covered with the waters, and inhabited by a demon, the supposed author

I believe, I was not at the time, accurately informed of; for it should seem, that Hindoos do not admit of a vacuum, in their system of nature:—*akash* means, in a general acceptation, aerial space; but in the present sense, I am induced to think that it is designed by the Hindoos, to denote the grand vivifying principle, termed in ancient fable, the Promethean fire, supposed to have animated the human body. In this note, it may not be uninteresting to introduce a tenet of the Egyptian theological philosophers, which corresponds with the idea I have formed of the *akash* of the Hindoos, and also, certain opinions entertained by them of the formation of the world, and the creation of animated bodies. These philosophical priests, who professed the tenets of Menes, their first law-giver, (whom they had deified and entitled, Osiris, or the sun), said that fire, or rather, a refined spirit, which they distinguished from the elemental fire, was diffused through all nature, and composed the essence of that being, who first gave form and order to matter. They believed that five elements—the mind, fire, air, earth, and water, constituted the entire world: they called the mind Jupiter, which signifies the source of life, and they considered him the father of all intelligent beings. The fire they termed Vulcan, who they alledged, contributed chiefly to the production and perfection of all things. Earth, being as it were the bosom in which all things receive the principles of life, was known by the designation of Mother. The water was called Ocean, to which they gave the name of the Nursing Mother. The air was denominated Minerva, and believed to be the daughter of Jupiter, sprung from his brain, and always a virgin, as this element is incorruptible and rises to Heaven.—The Egyptian philosophers supposed, that all the original matter of the universe had been immersed in a chaos, and was gradually separated from it by fermentation; that the air was in continual agitation; that the fire, liberated from the grosser matter, had ascended, and formed the sun and stars, the highest objects of the universe; that spirit, or the mind, the most subtle part of fire, was dispersed through all parts, to animate life, and impart voluntary motion. They added, that the earth and water, which after the separation of the air were yet embodied, became a globe, which constantly revolving on its axis, by a motion excited by the fire the separation of the two bodies was effected; and that the rays of the sun, making new fermentations on the surface of the earth,

author of evil, whom the Godhead drove into an abyfs under the earth.*

THE Hindoos, as Mr. Halhed in his tranflation of the Code of Hindoo Laws has fully fet forth, are arranged in four grand cafts, or tribes;† that of the Bramin, the Chittery, the Bhyfe, and the Sooder. Each of these cafts is subdivided into numerous fefts, the particular ufages of which are preferved with care and attentive diftinctions. There are feftaries, alfo of the fame tribe, who do not admit of the intercourfe of marriage with each other,

earth, yet foft and flimy, produced numerous excreffences, which, nourifhed and ftrengthened by the grofs vapours of the night,—the action of the moon,—and afterwards, by the heat of the day, appeared at length, in the forms of different animals. Thofe in whom the fire predominated, mounted into air, and became birds: thofe which participated more of earth, as men, quadrupeds—and reptiles, remained on the furface, while the more aqueous fubftances defcended to the waters, their proper place of abode. It was neceffary to give reafons, why nature had ftopped in her primary operations, and did not form many more animal creatures, as the manner of formation had been fo fimple and eafy. Syftematic philofophy, even in its infancy, did not want refource; and that of the Egyptians has met the objection, by urging, that nature had originally infpired every fpecies of animals with the inftinct of propagation; having fagely forefeen, that when the fun and the winds had entirely dried the earth, it would be incapable of producing perfect animals.—See Mr. Labbathier's *History of Ancient Nations*, tranflated by Mr. Stockdale.

* The writers of the Hindoo mythology, have given various and diffufe descriptions of the origin of the world, and of the human and animal race, but unite in blending them with a feries of extravagant and difgufting fables.

† There is in India an aboriginal race of people, who are not claffed in any of the fefts, and confined to the moft menial offices. They are not permitted to enter any temple of the Hindoos, and they obferve no reftriction. On fome parts of the coaft of Coromandel, they are called Dheresand Pariahs; and, in Bengal, Harees.

or

or of eating at the same board. It should seem, that the genuine race of the Chittery has for a great length of time been extinct, and that its place is now occupied by a spurious tribe. The Hindoos composing these casts and classes, are ultimately branched in two divisions; the one denominated Vyftnow Bukht; the other, Sheva Bukht. The followers of the former deity are usually distinguished by a longitudinal mark on the forehead, whilst those of the latter draw a parrallel line on that part. Vyftnow is worshipped under the representation of a human figure, having a circle of heads, and four hands; emblems of an all-seeing and all provident Being. The figure of a fabulous bird, on which he is supposed to ride, and denoting the velocity of his motion, is occasionally placed in front of this image. Sheva, or Eishwer, and as he is often denominated by the Hindoos, the Mhah Deve, is usually represented by a compound figure, describing the male and female parts of generation, and designed as the symbol of procreation and fecundity: these faculties, or qualities, being classed amongst the choicest blessings of the Hindoos, and the deprivation of them deemed a severe reproach and misfortune. Facing this designation of Mhah Deve, is sometimes seen, in a suppliant posture, the statue of a cow, or bull: an animal said to have derived his sacred qualities, from having been chosen by this god, as the favourite medium of his conveyance. But the more enlightened pundits say, that this creature hath been preserved from slaughter, by its great utility to man; it being his ablest assistant in the labours of the field,

field, and the chief provider of his immediate sustenance.* It doubtless argues a sound policy in the Hindoos, to stamp the ox with this sacred mark; for were its flesh eaten, as Hindostan is thinly supplied with horses, the various branches of agriculture would suffer an essential injury.

ANOTHER figure represents Sheva, with four hands, holding different emblems of his power; and five heads, four of which are directed to the cardinal points, and the fifth is placed with the face upwards, in the supposed act of contemplating the godhead. This deity who occupies numerous forms, is figured also with three eyes, one of which is placed in the forehead.

In gratitude for the service which Brimha has performed on earth, it would reasonably be supposed, that the thanksgiving of his people would in some degree be proportioned to his works. But the Hindoos have not dedicated one temple to his honor; nor have they established a single festival, in remembrance of his deeds. It would redound but little to my credit, did I insert in this place the reasons alledged in their religious tracts, for the neglect of Brimha. It is a tale framed to amuse the credulous Hindoo, and procure a meal to an artful priest. The ostensible want of attention to the memory of Brimha, may on a more abstracted ground be ascribed to an opinion, that the powers of procreation having been primarily set in action, and operating by a law impulsive

* Milk and butter compose a great part of the aliment of an Hindoo.

and

and undeviating, whose immediate benefits exist, and are conspicuously displayed in its effects, no ritual necessity called for the commemoration of its first cause, or the propitiation of its future influence.

THE Hindoos believe implicitly in predestination, and in the transmigration of the soul. The first, though it may operate in cramping the genius and obstructing its progressive powers, has a happy tendency in assuaging their misfortunes, and administering a comfort in all the wants of life. They say, it is the hand of God, which for some inscrutable purpose, directs and impels the actions of his creatures. The doctrine of Metempsychosis restrains them from the use of animal food,* an aliment not necessary in a hot climate, and often attended with pernicious consequences. This restriction may also have contributed to infuse into their minds an abhorrence of sanguinary acts, and inculcate the virtues of humanity and general philanthropy.

THE Hindoos compute their grand evolutions of time by epochs, called in their language Jogues, of which there are four, corresponding, in the ascribed qualities, with their golden, silver, brazen, and iron ages of the ancients. The present, they say, is the Khullee,† or the fourth Jogue ; and that at the expiration of every age, the Supreme Being has destroyed the world, and that a

* This tenet is not, at this day, strictly adhered to ; for the Hindoos of the second and fourth cast occasionally use flesh meat, and the Bramins of Bengal invariably eat fish.

† The Christian Æra, 1787, corresponds with 4888, of the Khulle Taque.

continued

continued succession of Jagues will revolve *ad infinitum*. The records of this ancient people teem so profusely with fable, and abound throughout in such extravagant relations of their demi-gods, similar in their feasts to the Bacchus, Hercules, and Theseus of the Greeks, that no rational or satisfactory conclusion can be drawn, for any adjustment of chronology. A pundit will introduce into his legend a lack of years,* with as much facility, and perhaps conviction to himself, as our commentators of theological history would reduce to their standard, half a century.

THE principles of the Hindoo religion, with its most essential tenets, were composed, it is asserted, by Brimha, and comprised in four books, entitled the Bairds or Vaidis; a word in the Sanscrit language signifying mystery. In that part of the peninsula of India bordering on the Coromandel side, these sacred writings are named the Vaidums. The Talinghahs and Malabars make little distinction between the letters B, and V, and invariably terminate with an M, all Sanscrit words. The Shastra is a voluminous commentary on the Bairds, and has been written by various pundits, for the purpose of illustrating the Hindoo Mythology. From the Shastra proceed those preposterous ceremonies, which have been dragged into the Hindoo system of worship; all tending to shackle the vulgar mind, and produce in it a slavish reverence for the tribe of Bramins. The privilege of reading the Bairds, and expounding

* An hundred thousand.

its texts, is only allowed to them ; and prohibited to the other casts, under severe penalties. By the sole investment of this important authority, the priest is left at liberty to explain the original doctrine in the manner that may most forcibly consolidate the power and promote the interest of his order. In the transmigration of the soul into different bodies, consists the various gradations of reward and punishment amongst the Hindoos. Conformably to their actions, they are transposed into such bodies, whether of the human or brute species, as their conduct, whilst they occupied their former tenements, may have merited. They do not admit of eternal punishments, and shudder at the idea of a belief so disconsonant to the opinion which they have formed of the Supreme Being.

Evil dispositions, they say, are chastised by a confinement in the bodies of those animals, whom they most resemble in their nature, and are constrained to occupy them, till their vices are either eradicated, or sufficiently qualified to deserve the possession of superior forms. The good actions of man, the Hindoo law-giver has written, will be rewarded by his admission into those bodies which enjoy the utmost human happiness ; as that which the magistrate feels on the just and merciful execution of the trust which has been committed to him ; or that high sense of pleasure which the man of humanity participates, when he has alleviated the distresses of the unfortunate, or otherwise promoted the welfare of mankind. — After a certain series of transmigration rendered acceptable to the

the Deity by a pursuit of virtue, and when his soul shall be completely purified from the taints of evil, the Hindoo is admitted to a participation of the radiant and never-ceasing glory of his first cause.* The soul's receiving this act of bliss, is described by comparing it to a ray of light, attracted by the grand powers of the sun, to which it shoots with an immense velocity, and is there absorbed in the blaze of splendor.

Yum Durm Rajah officiates in the same capacity amongst the Hindoos, as Minos did in the infernal regions of the ancients. All souls liberated from the body, are supposed to appear at the tribunal of Yum Durm, where their former actions are proclaimed aloud, and examined by this judge, who passes an immediate sentence. Should the disposition of a man, have been so flagitiously depraved, as to be judged unworthy, even of an introduction into the body of the vilest animal, such corporal punishment is imposed on him, as may be thought adequate to his crimes; and the soul is afterwards placed in some suitable station on earth. According to the religious tradition of the Hindoos. Sree Mun Narrain, since the creation of the world, has at nine different periods assumed incarnated forms, either for the purpose of eradicating some terrestrial evil,] or chastising the sins of mankind.† The Hin-

* The union of the human soul with the divine etherial substance of the universe, is the ancient doctrine of Pythagoras and Plato; but it seems to exclude any personal or conscious immortality. See Gibbon's History, volume 4th, p. 202, in a note.

† According to the Hindoo tradition, a tenth incarnation of the Deity is yet expected.

doos worship a secondary species of deity, which they wildly multiply to the number of thirty-three crores,* who in their different functions, are designed to represent the numberless attributes of the Supreme Deity.

FROM the crowd of images which the Bramin has placed in the temples of the Hindoos, they have been branded with the appellation of idolaters. When this mode of offering supplications or thansgiving to the Supreme Being is dispassionately examined, it will be seen, that a personification of the attributes of the Deity is not unfitly adapted to the general comprehension. Those (and they compose a great portion of the people) who are not endowed with the ability of reading the praise of God, can with facility conceive a certain idea of his greatness, in contemplating a figure, sculptured with many heads and with many hands, adorned with every symbol of human power, and beheld by all classes of men with unfeigned reverence. The origin of emblematical figures has long preceded the use of letters. We find in the Spanish records, that intelligence of the first arrival of the Europeans on the coast of Mexico, was described to Montezuma by figures painted on cotton cloth. In a rude society, it was evidently a more easy operation to convey an idea through the medium of a figure cut in wood or moulded in clay, than to invent an alphabet, and out of it compose a regulated assemblage of words, necessary for the formation of a written language.

* A crore is a hundred lacks;

THE immense group of Hindoo gods enjoy immortality, with which they are gifted by drinking a water called Amrut, a mythological beverage, bearing some analogy to the nectar of Homer's Deities. In the mythology of the Hindoos is found an elegant description of nine goddesses, resembling, in a certain degree, the muses of the ancients, in the nature of their occupations. There is also most picturesquely delineated, the god of love, who has a variety of epithets, all significant of the unbounded sway which he possesses over the hearts of men. His common names are Kaum and Mudden, and he is represented as a pleasing youth, armed with a bow of sugar cane, strung with the stings of bees; and five arrows, denoting the five senses, each of which is baited with different qualities of the poison of love. A picture was found at Tanjore, when the fort was captured* riding on a elephant, whose form was composed of the figures of seven young women, entwined together in so ingenious and whimsical a manner, as to exhibit an exact shape of that bulky animal. In the Befs† Eishwer Pagoda at Benares, is seen a stone figure, well executed, of the god of the sun sitting in a chariot, and driving a horse with twelve heads, an evident allusion to the divisions of the ecliptic.

* It is also said to represent Kishin, an incarnated form of the Deity.

† An abbreviated compound of Vyftnow, or Bishen and Eishwer. In this temple, which is dedicated to these two Deities in conjunction, the sectaries of both offer up their prayers.

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WITHOUT putting etymology to the torture, or moulding to the shape of his system the deceitful aids of chronology, the careful observer might be enabled to trace some parts of the religious worship of the Hindoos into Egypt. He would discover the sacred Bull or Cow of Sheva, placed high in the holy legends of the Coptis; and he would see the snake, one of the mysterious associates of Sree Mun Narrain, devoutly revered by that nation, as the hieroglyphic of wisdom and longevity. It would appear that the onion, mentioned by historians to be held in such profound veneration amongst the Egyptians, is no less marked with reverence in Hindostan; where, though the use of a vegetable diet is strongly inculcated, and with not a very large deviation, usually adopted, the onion is forbidden to many of the sects; and in the upper part of India, when an oath, on which a matter of importance depends, is administered, the Bramin frequently introduces the onion, to render the ceremony more sacred.

In comparing the religious worship of the Hindoos with that of the ancients, the functions of some of the Deities appear conspicuously uniform; and were it possible to procure a description of the occupations and various powers of the Hindoo subaltern gods, it might be found, that the group of the western pantheon had been selected from the divine assembly of Brimha. The Egyptians and the Greeks, in their commerce with India, through the channel of the Red Sea, have left, I have been sometimes induced to believe, tokens behind them of their connection with the Hindoos.

Hindoos. In the collection of a gentleman at Benares are several valuable antiques, which were purchased by the merchants of that city: one of which, representing a matron, is cut in a manner bearing every mark of Grecian skill; and another exhibited Cleopatra in the act of being bitten by the asp. The same gentleman had in his possession a Medusa's head, on an emerald, found also at Benares, which being sent to England, was unreservedly acknowledged to be the work of a Grecian or Roman master. Some years ago, a high finished Camaieu was procured at Guzerat, whereon Hercules slaying the Nemean lion, was executed with much taste and spirit. These circumstances are adduced to support a conjecture, that, during the intercourse which existed between the natives of Egypt and India, the former might have introduced into their country, with some of the rare and luxurious products of Hindoostan, certain tenets and ceremonies of Hindoo mythology. In endeavouring to point out the track of these antiques, it is to be noticed, that they might have found a way into India in the cabinets of the Mahometans, who in the more early period of their empire, were little less enthusiastic in the admiration of Grecian productions and literature, than the Romans. And it is a fact in need of no illustration, that the revival of letters and the arts, after the Roman world had been immersed in Gothic ruin, received a powerful aid from the princes of the Khâlifhat.

My knowledge of astronomy is so confined, that I am almost
incapa-

incapacitated from describing the attainment of the Bramins in that science, long before the æra in which it flourished in the eastern world. The zodiac, with its twelve signs, is well known to the Hindoos; and they have bestowed on the seven days of the week, which commences with sunday, the names of the planets. The solar year* of the Hindoos, which is arranged in six seasons, consists of twelve months, containing three hundred and sixty-five days; and once in the term of four years an additional day is annexed for the completion of the earth's precise revolutions round the sun. Commercial transactions and writings of correspondence are dated amongst the Hindoos according to the lunar, or Lumbut year, which commences about the period of the vernal equinox. The month is calculated from the full moon, and is divided into thirty equal parts. Those comprehending the moon's encrease, are termed Bood, and the portion of its wane, Bole, or Bood. On the third year of the Lumbut, an extraordinary month is intercalated, for the inclusion of the time required in equalizing the lunar and solar systems. The Joaguels are divided into cycles of twelve and sixty years, each of which is distinguished by its pecu-

* The solar, or as it is denominated by the Hindoos, the Lunkrant year, begins on the 10th or 11th of April, and its months are composed occasionally of 29, 30, 31, and 32 days. The common epocha of Hindoostan was established by the Rajah Vickerum Mhajeet, and founded 57 years before the year of Christ. Some Hindoo nations compute their time from other periods, as in Bengal; but their historical writings are generally adapted to the year of Vickerum Mhajeet; who was much celebrated in Hindoostan, for his magnificence, and liberal protection of men of genius.

liar denomination.* The observatory at Benares, though rude in its structure, and containing instruments suitably coarse, proves notwithstanding, that the Hindoos possess the knowledge of ascertaining the motions of the heavenly bodies. Could access be obtained to such records of the Hindoos as are divested of that redundancy of fable with which their priests have so copiously interwoven them, it would not be presumptuous to suppose, that we would discover they had been, in the more early ages of the world, one of the most enlightened and powerful nations that inhabited the earth.

THE empire of the Hindoos, as related in many of their historical tracts, consisted of fifty-six separate principalities, ultimately governed by one prince, whose kingdom extended from the southern limits of Tartary to the island of Ceylon, and from the confines of Assam and Arracan to the river Indus. This extensive space was inhabited by a people who were divided into four distinct tribes, each exercising different functions, but all uniting in their various branches to promote the general good. It abounded in fair and opulent cities, which were decorated with magnificent

* The Hindoos, I believe, commonly class their time in cycles of sixty years, though that of twelve is also well known to them. Amongst some articles of plunder, captured by the Company's troops in a Bantan Fort, was found, with other objects of the Hindoo worship, an image of the Mahah Deve, and a printed representation of the figures describing the Tartar cycle, which is composed of 12 years. This figurative mode of marking time, which has prevailed from high antiquity in Japan, China, Siam, and through the vast regions of Tartary, is at this day observed in the Turkish Empire.

temples for the worship of the gods ; and with sumptuous mansions, gardens, and fountains, for the pleasure and the accommodation of the inhabitants. Useful and elegant artisans, skilled in raising stupendous buildings, in fabricating gold, silver, and the most delicate cotton cloths, and in the curious workmanship of precious stones and metals, all found encouragement in the exercise of their professions.* Salutary ordinances directed the Hindoos in the punishment of crimes and the security of property ; and when some glaring indulgencies in favour of the sacred tribe are excepted, we must yield an unreserved approbation to the justice and wisdom of their laws. The traveller was enabled to journey through this extensive empire, with an ease and safety, unknown in other countries. The public roads were shaded with trees ; and frequent habitations, accommodated with a pond or well, were founded for the conveniency of the passenger ; and should he have been pillaged in any part of the country, the district in which the damage had been sustained, was obliged to make restitution.—When this empire, its polished people, and the progress which science had made amongst them, are attentively considered ; when, at the same period, a retrospective view is thrown on

* This description may be judged chimerical and extravagant by those who have not witnessed the construction of the ancient Hindoo monuments, or examined the history of their empire when it first belonged to the Mahometans. These soldiers are represented to have been fascinated by the display of its grandeur, and to have stood amazed at the treasures that were disclosed. Vide Dow's Relation of the Plunder of the Samnaut Temple.

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the states of the European world, then immerged in, or emerging from, ignorance and barbarity, we must behold Hindostan with wonder and respect; and we may assert without forfeiting the claims of truth and moderation, that however far the European world now out-strips the nations of the East, the followers of Brimha in the early periods of life, were possessed of a fund amply stored with valuable materials of philosophy and useful knowledge. The humane mind will naturally feel a sense of sorrow and pity for a people, who have fallen from so conspicuous a height of glory and fortune, and who probably have contributed to polish and exalt the nations, who now hold them in subjection.

To form an accurate judgment of the genius of the Hindoos, or to describe the limit to which they extended art and science, it were requisite, could the necessary materials be procured, to exhibit the condition of their empire, before it had felt the severe and victorious arms of the Mahometans. — A partial and degrading relation would be made of the Hindoos, were a description of their laws, government, and manner, taken from the appearance they make at this day in the eye of the world. Hindostan was overthrown by a fierce race of men, who in their rapid course of conquest, exerted the most furious efforts in levelling every monument of worship and taste. They massacred the priests and plundered the temples, with a keenness and ferocity, in which their first chiefs might have gloried. A people thus crushed, groaning under the load of oppression, and dismayed at the sight of incessant cruelties,

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cruelties, must soon have lost the spirit of science, and the exertion of genius : especially as the fine arts were so blended with their system of religion, that the persecution of the one, must have shed a baneful influence on the existence of the other. To decide on, or affix, the character of the Hindoo, from the point of view in which he is now beheld, would, in a large degree, be similar to the attempt of conveying an exact idea of ancient Greece, from the materials now presented by that wretched country. The disquisition of the man of philanthropy, liberated from the fetters of prejudice, will be far different :—he will enjoy congenial pleasure, in dispelling the shade of obscurity, which hath long enveloped the history of the Hindoo :—he will endeavour to carry it back to that æra of grandeur, which his country enjoyed in her day of prosperity, and there hold him out to the information of mankind ; the generality of whom, whether from motives of contempt, or habits of indolence, have yet acquired but a trivial and incorrect knowledge of this ancient people. It will then be seen, that the genius of the Hindoos was happily led on ; and that their bent of disposition was aptly regulated and attempered by the rules established for the performance of their several professions. A precision which repelled the encroachments of error or design, prescribed to them their respective duties in the state, and in society, and wholly precluded any other sect from infringing on the privileges of another. The Bramin was invested with the uncontrolled guardianship of religion ; he became the perpetual medium, through which the inferior

ferior classes addressed their god : he was also the sole depositary and instructor of science, and to his care and ability was intrusted the education of youth. The importance of these offices must have given to the Bramin great sway in a community where a knowledge of religious worship, from its complex variety, becomes a task of arduous labour ; and where, at the same time, a performance of the rites of his religion, is deemed an obligation indispensably incumbent on the Hindoo, in his acquisition of future happiness. These employments were judged of sufficient magnitude to occupy the whole attention of the Bramin, and he was strictly interdicted from all temporal affairs. The authority of exercising the functions of royalty, seems to have devolved without reserve on the Chittery or Rajah, and his possessions were held hereditary in the line of legitimate male primogeniture. The youngest branch of this race were employed in the army, and entrusted with the charge of the forts and strong holds of the country. The occupation of a merchant, with the transactions of traffic, was committed to the Bhyse, or Banian, and it was declared unlawful for the other tribes to engage in commerce. The husbandman, the artisan, the private soldier, and the labourer, compose the Looder, or the fourth cast of Hindoo ; and each of these respective professions was exclusively pursued. Thus, distinctly arranged, and on the severest penalties prohibited from extraneous mixture, or the admission of proselytes, the Hindoo government

vernment acquired an uniformity and vigour, the natural result of its principles.*

WERE an analogy ascertained between the mythology of the Hindoos and Egyptians, perceptible traces of which are occasionally presented, it might then become a matter of doubt which people, for the greatest space of time have been the most polished and enlightened. From the examples which have been brought forward for the explanation of some of the most conspicuous parts of the mythology of the Hindoos, and to demonstrate the probable antiquity of that nation, it may seem, that I favour the belief of Egypt's having received a portion of her stock of science and religion from India. With a deference to popular opinion, and disclaiming all fabrication of system, I must avow an inclination to this opinion. One fact amongst some others, afforded me a fair proof of the high antiquity of the Hindoos, as a civilized nation, and marks a strong disapprobation of a foreign intercourse.

THEY are forbidden to cross the river Attoc, the name of which, in certain dialects of their language, signifies prohibition ; and should they pass this boundary, they are held unclean, and in

* Many of the fences that marked the limits of the respective tribes, are now broken down. The Bramins of the Decan and Punjal, have taken up the sword, and are seen crowding the ranks of an army ; the Chittery occasionally takes himself to traffic, and the Sooder has become the inheritor of principalities. Mararow, the gallant Mahrattah officer and chief of Ghooty, was of the fourth cast of Hindoos.

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the strict sense of religious law, forfeit their rank in the tribes they may be classed in. They were also, either forbidden from embarking on the ocean, or they were deterred from undertaking marine expeditions, by the difficulties incurred in procuring at sea, the requisite diet for a Hindoo. The probability therefore is not apparent, that any part of a people, fenced in by this restriction, and who were so proudly centered in themselves, as to reject with abhorrence, the admission of proselytes, would have emigrated into a distant country, and brought from thence a system of religious worship ; nor does any probable tradition authorize the belief of an Egyptian colony having been established in India. The capacious space which Hindostan occupies on the face of the globe, the advantages it derives from soil and climate, and from its numerous rivers, some of them of the first class of magnitude, may be adduced as reasonable arguments of its having been peopled at a more early period of time than Egypt, which does not possess the like local benefits. If the degree of perfection which manufactures have attained, be received as a criterion to judge of the progress of civilization, and if it be also admitted as a test of deciding on the antiquity of a people, who adopt no foreign improvements, little hesitation would occur, in bestowing the palm of precedence on Hindostan, whose fabrics of the most delicate and beautiful contexture, have been long held in admiration, and have hitherto stood unrivalled. Let me conclude this comparative view, with observing, and I trust dispassionately, that when we see a
people

people possessed of an ample stock of science of well digested ordinances, for the protection and improvement of society—and of a religion whose tenets consist of the utmost refinement, and variety of ceremony—and, at the same time, observe amongst other Asiatic nations, and the Egyptians of former times, but partial distributions of knowledge, law, and religion—we must be led to entertain a supposition, that the proprietors of the lesser, have been supplied from the sources of the greater fund. These reflections which have been furnished by experience and various information, will perhaps afford more satisfaction, than the laboured and perplexed proofs of dates and etymology, which are often framed, as they most commodiously accord with some favourite hypothesis.

AMONGST the Hindoos, marriage,* when it can be performed with any degree of conveniency, is deemed an indispensable duty, and it is believed, that propagating the species in that state, entitles parents to singular marks of the divine favour. They shew a disapprobation of celibacy by many marks of opprobrium and scorn; and I have frequently observed, that when a Hindoo, from question, or other causes, has been brought to the affirmation of

* This word, used in the Sanscrit language, is often termed *Callian*, which signifies pleasure. The Hindoos, in common usage, have but one wife, and when this rule is deviated from, it is considered a species of indecency. There is a set, though not numerous, of mendicants, called *Jogues*, or *Byraghees*, who live in a state of celibacy.

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his single state, he has appeared disconcerted and ashamed, and immediately attributed his solitary condition to ill fortune, or some domestic inconveniency. It is to this institution, which is strongly recommended, and, I may say, even enforced, that the generally extensive population of Hindostan, and its speedy recovery from the calamities of war and famine, may be largely ascribed. The entire system of domestic ordinance and œconomy of the Hindoos, is founded on a firm, yet, simple basis ; from which arise effects, happy in themselves, and powerfully operative in uniting the bonds of society. By the ancient laws of the country, the wife depends for the enjoyment of every pleasure, as well as for most of the ordinary accommodations of life, on the immediate existence of her husband ; and it becomes her invariable interest to preserve his health, as much of her happiness is centered in his living to an old age. On the demise of the husband, the wife virtually devolves into a *caput mortuum* ; she is not permitted to marry again, she is deprived of all consequence in the family, and divested of the marks of ornament and distinction. There are certain religious ceremonies not lawful for her to perform, and in some instances, she is held unclean ; but on all occasions, after the husband's death, the widow is classed in the house as a slave or a menial servant. But this usage has not so generally prevailed in latter times. The wives of the deceased Hindoos have moderated that spirit of enthusiastic pride, or impulse of affection, which was used to urge them to self-destruction on the pile of their husbands.

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Their grief can now be assuaged, and their religious duties reconciled, by a participation of domestic comforts ; and many of the Hindoo widows, especially in the Marhattah country, have acquired by their ability, their wealth, connection, or intrigue, the possession of extensive power and influence. Amongst the superior tribes of the Hindoos, where the sense of honor or shame, is more delicately preserved, rather than suffer a degradation, by which female attractions are extinguished, and the pride and spirit of the sex depressed, the women are impelled by a furious courage, softened by the term of matrimonial affection, to terminate the misery of their condition in death. According to a passage of the Shaster of the Hindoos, which I examined by the help of an interpreter, it is specifically ordained, that a wife ought to burn herself at her husband's death ; should she not possess the resolution of sustaining this trial, she is directed to make a pilgrimage to some of the sacred places of Hindoo ablution, as Benares, Allahabad, Ghayah, &c. and there, appropriating her property to charitable uses, offer up a sacrifice of her hair to the memory of her husband. She is not to decorate her person with jewels, with gold, silver, or any female ornament : she is not to use perfumes, nor eat flesh, fish, or butter ; but to live on plain barley or wheaten bread, and eat but once in a day. Her time is to be employed in the constant worship of God, and the purification of her mind, from anger, malice, and avarice ; and she is to withdraw herself from all the concerns of the world. If her life is passed in these acts she is promised after death to enter
heaven,

heaven, without suffering intermediate purgation. In addition to the dread of so degraded a state of mortification, the widow on the other side is told by the Bramins, that the performance of the act of self-destruction will entitle her to an ample participation of exquisite future joys, and will ensure to her progeny the pre-eminent favor of the Deity. Though the issue of such a resolution forcibly affects those feelings of humanity cherished amongst European nations, yet as the usage appears to originate in a cause tending to strengthen domestic policy, it ought not to be hastily condemned, or imputed altogether to the dictates of cruelty or injustice.

Conformably to the state of subordination in which Hindoo women are placed, it has been judged expedient to debar them the use of letters. The Hindoos hold the invariable language, that acquired accomplishments are not necessary to the domestic classes of the female sex, whether for contributing to her individual happiness, or preserving the decorum of character, and simplicity of manners, which alone render her useful or amiable, in the estimation of her family. They urge that a knowledge of literature would conduce to draw a woman from her household cares, and give a disrelish to those offices, in which consist the only satisfaction and amusement that she can, with propriety, and an observance of rectitude, partake of; and such is the force of custom, that a Hindoo woman would incur a severe reproach, were it known that she could read or write. The Hindoo dancing girls, whose occupations are avowedly devoted to the public pleasure, are, on the contrary

taught the use of letters, and are minutely instructed in the knowledge of every attraction and blandishment, which can operate in communicating the sensual pleasure of love. These women are not obliged to seek shelter in private haunts, nor are they, on account of their professional conduct, marked with opprobrious stigma. They compose a particular class of society, and enjoy the avowed protection of government, for which they are assessed according to their several capacities. No religious ceremony or festival is thought to be completely performed, with the accompaniment of dancing women. They usually attend on a certain day of the week, at the court of the prince or governor of the district, either to make an obeisance, or exhibit a professional entertainment; and in some of the provinces, they are endowed with grants of the public lands.*

AN Hindoo family is governed with efficient power by the male senior member, to whom the other branches shew an attentive respect, and in domestic life a ready submission. A son will not sit in the presence of his father without express desire, and in his deportment and conversation, observes to him a dutiful, as well

* The Hindoo dancing-women are here only alluded to, and those particularly who assist (which is a numerous class) at the ceremonies of worship. As they receive a maintenance from the revenue of the pagoda, or from private persons, they are not driven by necessity into a promiscuous intercourse with the world. But it is to be observed, that those who do not receive any permanent stipend, are little less dissolute and abandoned in their habits of life, than a female of similar description in European countries.

as affectionate, behaviour. In the course of a long residence in India, and rather a close investigation of Hindoo customs and manners, I never discovered what our language has termed a free thinker.* The most celebrated characters amongst the Hindoos, and their men of the world, as Scindia, Nanah Purnawees,† and the Bhothulla, believe the tenets of the doctrine of Brimha with as much sincerity, and practice the minutest ceremony with as much scrupulous attention, as the simplest or most bigotted peasant in the country.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

* There are some schismatic sects found amongst the Hindoos, and even classes of that people, who reject the authority of the Baidis, and the whole construction of Bramin mythology; but however pure the original mode of their worship might have been, it is now grossly entangled with ceremony and emblem. The most considerable branch of these sectaries is denominated Pooje; who have bestowed on the object of their adoration, the title Paurus Naut, which in the Sanscrit may be termed the lord of the alchymical philosopher's stone.

† Mharattah chiefs of eminence.

LET-

LETTER III.

Benares, 30th November, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

ON the 3d of this month, I made an excursion to Bidgi-ghur,* a place rendered famous in the Bengal annals, from a large amount of plunder acquired there by the English troops. On the first day, I arrived at Lutteef-ghur, about 18 miles to the southwest of Benares. The fort was entirely deserted, and the passage approaching to it is almost choaked up by brushwood, and the projected branches of trees. Lutteef-ghur stands in the centre of a circular range of hills, from the summit of which, a thick, and in most places a high wood, reaches to the walls of the fort. The air of this spot being deprived of a quick circulation, has acquired a malignant quality, and communicates its pernicious influence to all animal bodies. It is in these situations, where as it is termed, the hill fever is produced :—a disease, which pervading every part of the animal œconomy, contaminates

* Bidgi and Idgi, according to the mythology of the Hindoos, keep watch at the gate of Paradise ; Ghur, in the Hindoo, is a fortress or strong hold.

the

the whole mass of blood, and will only yield to the power of mercury. The water also in such places partakes of the like baneful property:—it should seem that the air infuses into this element, a certain portion of that pestiferous quality, with which the climate of woody and confined countries in India is ever pregnant. The falling of the branches and leaves into rivulets and reservoirs of water, may likewise increase the noxious effect. Having frequently witnessed the ill effects of a confined air, I am the more emboldened to hazard these conjectures; which I will close with noticing to you, that wherever I have observed an impurity of air the water has been equally pernicious.

At the gate of the fort, had taken up his lonely residence, a Mahometan Faquir, who bore on him, poor man! evident proofs of the destructive climate of Lutteef-ghur;—he was meagre, wan, and nearly consumed by the violence of a fever and ague. When I desired him to leave so melancholy a station, and go where he might recover his health, he shewed little attention to the advice, and preferred, he said, an existence in this place, under a load of misery and the precarious charity of passengers, to the risk of starving in places where he might be wholly unknown.

On the 4th, after a Journey of about twenty miles, I arrived near the foot of Bidgi-ghur hill, where I slept, and in the morning walked up to the fort, which is a circumvallation of the crown of a rocky hill, measuring from the immediate base to the summit, a little more perhaps than two miles.

THE

THE artificial fortification is neither strong, nor is it composed of substantial materials, as is seen by a fissure of the wall, caused by the rains of the last year, and also by a breach that was made during the siege; which shew that the wall is chiefly composed of rough stones cemented with clay. This strong hold owes its importance solely to its height and steepness; and had it been defended with a common share of conduct and spirit, the capture would have been attended with much difficulty and bloodshed. It has been said indeed, that exclusively of the hazardous attempt of taking Bidgi-ghur by storm, the greater part of the troops would have been destroyed by fevers, had they remained in that quarter a month longer. Three deep reservoirs, excavated on the top of the hill, plentifully supply the garrison with water. Some of the bastions on the eastern side are supported by branches of the rock, which projecting horizontally eight or ten feet from the summit, holds out in the air a solid foundation. The prospect around is diversified and picturesque, but when you throw the eye on the deep and rugged precipice beneath, the view is infinitely grand, though not divested of that horror, which naturally affects the mind in contemplating objects from so abrupt a height. The rising and setting sun at Bidgi-ghur exhibits a magnificent scene, and excites a train of ideas strongly impressed with a grateful admiration of the first cause of nature. The view of the setting sun takes in the river Soane, which is seen winding its stream, brightened by the rays of the western light, through a long tract of diversified country.

try.—A fort also appears on the side of a distant hill, which is only brought into the evening prospect.

THE village of Mow, situate at the bottom of the descent, which before the capture of Bidgi-ghur was well peopled, and possessed a considerable commerce, is now deserted and in ruins. This village, whose loss is severely felt in many parts of the country, afforded the only mart on that quarter for supplying the wants of the bordering mountaineers, who resorted thither, and bartered their wares for the produce of the low lands. Since the depopulation of Mow this commercial communication has ceased, and the Benares traders maintain little connection with the inhabitants of the hills, who are a hardy active race of men, and were they encouraged like those of Bauglepore to enter into our service, an useful body of soldiers might be acquired. They are not, it is said, subject to that species of fever incident to a hilly country, which has operated so fatally on the health of our troops; nor do they entertain those prejudices in their mode of living which affect the higher ranks of the Hindoos, and which have been found to embarrass military operations. An introduction also of a foreign class of men into the army, might be conducive by its counterpoise, to the ensuring the fidelity of the whole body of native troops.

BULWANT Sing, through a channel of intrigue and direct dishonesty, qualities he notoriously possessed, seized on Bidgi-ghur, which he strengthened and made the principal repository of his

wealth ; and Cheyt Sing,* who augmented the works and increased the treasures, constructed a strong bridge of stone over a small river that skirts the bottom of the hill.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

* The Son of Bulwant Sing, and now a fugitive in the Camp of Seindia.

LET-

LETTER IV.

*To T. D. F.**Allahabad, 17th Dec. 1782.*

MY DEAR SIR,

THE want of a subject to inform or amuse you, was the only cause of my not sooner acknowledging your long and very kind letter. You may with confidence believe, that a forgetfulness of the many offices of friendship which I have experienced at your hands, will never be classed in the roll of my offenses, which, God knows, already is too long a one! and trust me when I say, that I hold the connection which has so long subsisted between us, as the chiefest honor and credit of my life.

I AM now to inform you, that having resolved on proceeding to Europe by a northern tract, I assumed the name of a Georgian, for the sake of travelling with more safety, and left Benares on the 12th of this month, mounted upon a small horse. After a journey of four days, or forty coses, in which no particular occurrence fell out, I arrived at Allahabad. About mid-way commences the territory of Oude, which is immediately distinguished from that of Benares by its barren and desolate aspect. The fortrefs of Allaha-

bad, founded by Acbar,* stands on the point of land which forms the confluence of the Ganges and Jumma ;—a situation beautiful as it is commodious ; and in the season of the year when the flow of water is spacious and rapid, exhibits a scene of uncommon grandeur. On one side, the Ganges is seen rolling down a strong and yellow tide, and on the other, the Jumma glides with a clearer stream close to the walls of the fort. To this favorite and sacred spot a large assembly of Hindoos resort at an annual period, to wash away their sins, and obtain permission to begin a new score. These pilgrims, who are laid under contributions for participating this indulgence, furnish the yearly sum of about 50,000 rupees to the Vizier's treasury. The fort of Allahabad, which is built of stone, occupies a large space of ground, and has been amply supplied with superb and useful buildings, whether for promoting the pleasures or conveniences of life. The place entitled the Ghah Padshah† is one of the best Mahometan mansions I have hitherto seen ; but the want of suitable tenants has occasioned great disorders in it. The inside of its upper room is constructed of marble of variegated colours, and neatly adjusted. From this apartment, the lord of the world, as he is entitled by his subjects, hath a distinct view of twelve different suits of female apartments ; in the front of which, when the monarch issues the mandate, his beau-

* This Emperor commenced his reign in A. D. 1556, and died in 1605.

† The Imperial Apartment.

teous

teous handmaids are arranged in his sight that he may select the favorite of the day. The imperial choice, or rather edict, (to what humiliations do the laws of Mahomet subject ye my fair friends!) is conveyed to the fortunate damsel, and full joyously doth her heart beat, who on the day of review attracts the fancy of her lord;—for the passion of vanity is said oftentimes to supply in a female breast the place of love. I should not dislike, my friend, to be a Padshah myself, were it not that many of them have had their throats cut by their friends, and been compelled to drink very bitter potions; since liable to such treatment, much good may their fine ladies and other fine things do them!

In the palace yard stands a round pillar of about forty feet high, consisting of an entire stone, which coarsely resembles the porphyry, and seems covered with an inscription, in the ancient Hindoo character; but the letters are so much effaced and impaired by the ravages of time, which, my friend, spares not even marble, that they are become illegible. The erection of this monument is attributed to Beemshyne, whom your Bramin will tell you, was in his day a powerful chief, and one of the principal warriors in the Mhah Bhaut.* But as a devout believer, you must not repose too much faith on the Bramin's account of the æra in which this Beemshyne is said to have flourished; for he will tell you that our great progenitor was not even heard of in those days. The

* The great war which was carried on by the Paunch-paun-Deve, or the compact of the five Brothers, against Dur-jodin. See Wilkin's Gheeta.

Mahometans, who as furiously destroyed every monument and curious vestige not expressive of their doctrine, as they were actuated by a blind zeal in its propagation and support, have endeavoured to claim the construction of this pillar, and over the Hindoo record, they have engraved the names of many of their emperors, since the time of Babr.*

This pillar, which bears the mark of great antiquity, clearly evinces that Allahabad was a place of importance long before the æra of the Mahometan conquest of India. We should pass indeed a contemptuous, not to say an unjust censure, on the understanding of the ancient Hindoos, did we suppose that they had overlooked a situation, at once so favourable to the performance of their religious duties, and so happily adapted to the enjoyments of life. Almost as many cities have been brought forward by modern writers to prefer their claims to the Polybortha of India, as of old, contested for the birth-place of Homer. Monsieur d'Anville, the celebrated French geographer, seems to give the palm to Allahabad. Strabo has made mention of a grand causeway, leading from Polybortha into the interior parts of the country, and as such structures are durable and conspicuous, it is to be supposed that some remains of this road would have yet been visible; but on a careful examination I could not discover its most distant trace. A mound of earth appears on the western shore of the Ganges,

* The first Emperor of the race of Timur, who sat on the throne of Hindostan.

extending

extending about a mile in a line with the river where it approaches the fort, which has been evidently thrown up to prevent the stream in the seasons of the floods, from overflowing or injuring the town.

In touching on the subject of Allahabad, it is necessary to notice the tomb of Sultan Khufro. This mausoleum, about a mile to the eastward of the town, stands in the midst of a spacious garden enclosed with a high wall, and well supplied with a variety of flower and fruit trees, but from want of culture they look rugged and barren. Being clad in the Mahometan habit, and animating a desire to offer up my prayers at the royal shrine, I was immediately admitted. The public edifices of the Mahometans being constructed of the worst species of what is termed the Gothic order, they cannot afford much pleasure to the European eye, which is now taught to regard only the more simple and chaste proportions of art.* Yet the tomb of Khufro, though comprising few of the rules of architecture, hath in its appearance something peculiarly pleasing, and diffuses around it an air of melancholy, congenially suited to the purpose of its foundation. The building is nearly a square, raised from the ground by a low flight of steps, and has a vaulted roof in the form of a dome, whose outside is covered with tiles of a fine clay, stained with a diversity of colours, on which the reflection of

* This opinion does not presume to include the monuments at Agra, which have deserved the warmest approbation of our celebrated artists.

the

the sun produces a pleasing effect. No fund being established for supporting this monument, it cannot long survive the numerous edifices now scattered in ruins through the environs of Allahabad. Adjoining to the tomb of Khufro, is one of a smaller size, which a mendicant informed me was erected in commemoration of one of the female branches of the imperial family. Some Mahometan priests who live in the garden, keep the inside of the mausoleum decently clean, and the different appurtenances are still in good preservation, particularly the wooden bier in which the body is said to be deposited.* Observing a small curtain spread on the wall, I drew it aside, and must confess to you that I was impressed with a very sensible awe, on discovering the figure of an open hand, engraved on black marble : when I adverted to the nature of the place, and the use to which it had been applied, I at first supposed that this representation denoted the hand, or the power of the Deity ; but a farther recollection informed me, that Mahomed, Ali, Fatima,† Hufsin, and Hufsein, were described by this emblem ; and that in compliance with the law which excludes all works of sculpture and painting from Mahometan worship, it had been covered.

THE Allahabad districts once paid into the royal treasury a re-

* Sultan Khufro, the eldest son of Tehanquir, died A. D. 1622.

† Fatima, the daughter of Mahomed, was married to Ali, and had two sons, Hufsin and Hufsein.

yeune of between seventy and eighty lacks of rupees, but such is the impoverished and depopulated state of the Vizier's country, that it is at this day reduced to a fourth of that amount. Shaistah Khan, who was appointed by Aurungzebe to govern the provinces of Bengal and Bahar after the death of Amir Jumlah,* hath left many monuments of his liberality in the vicinity of Allahabad. On an insulated rock in the Jumna, near the city, and at a small distance from the south shore, he built a lofty apartment, which is cooled by the refreshing winds of the river, and commands a distant and wildly diversified view. A Persian inscription which I transcribed, says that Mahomed Shirreef, in the year of the Hegira, 1055,† finished this airy seat of pleasure by order of Shaistah Khan.—But from great men and their splendid works, let me descend to more trivial concerns, and to some account of my private adventures.

INDIA, you know, hath ever been famed for affording convenient places of accomodation to the traveller, who at the distance of eight and ten miles, seldom fails meeting with a public lodging, or a reservoir of water, where he may perform his ablutions, and quench his thirst. As the greater part of the inhabitants of India, from a simplicity of life, and the clement state of their climate, have but few superfluous wants; a slight defence

* The officer employed by Aurungzebe to oppose Sultan Shujah.

† A. D. 1645.

against the sun and rain, a small portion of cloathing, with plain food, constitute a large share of their real ones. In upper India, the œconomy of Karawan Serah,* or as it is usually called the Serauce, is conducted by better regulations, and its conveniencies more sensible felt, than in the southern parts of India. An inclosed area, the interior sides of which contain small apartments, fronting inwards with a principal gate-way, is appropriated in every village of note, to the use of travellers.† The stationary tenants of the serauce,‡ many of them women, and some of them very pretty, approach the traveller on his entrance, and in alluring language describe to him the various excellencies of their several lodgings. When the choice is made, (which is often perplexing, so many are the inducements thrown out on all sides of him) a bed § is laid out for his repose—a smoaking pipe is brought, and the utensils cleaned, for preparing his repast. The necessary

* Keravanferah is a Persée and Arabic compound of *Kar*, signifying business, *rawan* the participle of the verb *rusteen*, to go, move, proceed, &c. and of *serah*, an habitation. The Tucktravan, a vehicle used by travellers in many parts of Asia, is composed of the words, *tuckt*, a seat, or board, and the aforementioned participle. I have ventured to insert these etymologies for the use of those who are not conversant in the Persian Language.

† Shere Shah, who drove Humaim from the throne of Delhi, in 1542, is said to have been the first Mahometan who established Karavanferahs in India. This fact, also recorded in Dow's history, is well known amongst the natives.—Shere Shah built the fort of Rhotas, and the mausoleum of Safferam.

‡ The serauces at this day are usually given in rent.

§ This piece of furniture, of very simple construction, has low feet, with the sides and ends formed of bamboo or common rough wood, and the bottom of laced cords.

fum

sum is delivered into the hands generally of a girl, who procures the materials, and dresses his meal in a most expeditious manner. For two domestics and myself, the horse and his keeper, the whole of my daily expenditure amounted to a sum, which as you will not credit, I will not venture to note; and on days when I was inclined to feast, the addition of two or three pence procured a sumptuous fare, with the accompaniment of a fauce, which an alderman over his callipash might fight for.

Adieu, my dear Sir,

I am Your's, &c. &c.

LETTER V.

To I. D. F. Lucknow, 1st January, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

MY last letter to you written from Allahabad, contained some description of that place, with a farrago of desultory remarks arising from the moment, and hastily thrown together; but should the perusal have given a little amusement or information, I will contentedly sacrifice any claims to genius or method.—The following gives the detail of my journey from Allahabad to Lucknow, and though containing no matter of any substance, may afford you half an hour's relaxation.

ON the 20th of December,—after attending at the funeral ceremony performed in commemoration of Hussen and Hussein, or rather of the latter, I left Allahabad, and went no farther that day than Beghum* Serauce, a station of three cofs.† I will cursorily

* Beghum is the feminine gender of Begh, as Khanum is that of Khan, both titles of Tartar extraction: the latter has been often adopted by the female branches of the imperial family of Timur.

† Two British miles may be given to the average measurement of a cof.

embrace

embrace this occasion of informing you, that Huffin and Husein, were the sons of Ali, the son-in-law and nephew of the Arabian prophet. During the war which the first Mahomet maintained against the Infidels, (so the professor of the new faith denominated those of a different creed), Huffin was poisoned, and Husein was slain in battle. They consequently became martyrs ;—and the tomb of Husein, which was erected in the vicinity of Bagdat, is held by the Sheahs* in the same degree of veneration, with that of their prophet, by the other Mahometan sectaries.

ON the 21st, eat my breakfast and smoked my pipe at Tutty-pour, or the place of victory. On enquiry why a village so mean and small, had been distinguished by so great a name, I was told, that in former times, some signal victory had been obtained there ; but my intelligencer knew nothing of the parties concerned.—In the evening, having this day travelled six cosses, I halted at Alum Chund, the north-west limit of the Allahabad districts. The country had a barren and desolate aspect ; the cause of which was ascribed to the rapacity of a former renter. On entering the ferauce, I found the hosts with their spouses, busily occupied in the celebration of a marriage. Whether it was owing to the rare occurrence of this species of ceremony, (for they are a people as void of restraint or form as any under the sun) or whether previous difficulties had till now obstructed the union, I will not pretend

* The Mahometans of the sect of Ali, are so called.

to determine ; but the joy and merriment which circulated in their assembly, could not be surpassed. The men were collected in a body, drinking arrack, and beating a tom-tom ; * and the women, in a separate *coterie*, were chewing betle, and speaking very loud and quick. Though this jubilee had engrossed a great share of their attention, they gave me a good supper, and a comfortable lodging.

ON the 22d, — I arrived at the Kurrah Manickpour, — eight coffes and an half. In my way, I halted during the heat of the day at the serauce of Shahzadpour, which together with the town, is said to have been built by the Shaiftah Khan,* mentioned in my last letter. This nobleman, according to Bernier, was highly celebrated for his eloquence, and elegant style of writing, which it is thought contributed to promote the early success of Aurungzebe. The serauce of Shahzadpour, built chiefly of brick and mortar, has spacious and commodious apartments, but from want of repair, one angle of it has fallen into ruins. It is seriously to be lamented, that edifices founded on principles of such public spirit, or motives equally beneficial to the state, and whose uses are so universally felt, should be suffered to moulder into decay. It would seem, that when the larger serauces were first founded, certain portions of land, or other established funds, were set apart for keeping them in

* A small drum.

† He was the maternal uncle of Aurungzebe.

necessary

necessary order : but such has been the distracted state of Hindostan for these later periods, and such the oppressions, or perhaps poverty of its rulers, that these grants have either been resumed, or diverted into other channels. In stigmatizing any specific class of men, I believe I have committed an error ; for on a more dispassionate view, a large share of censure falls on the people at large. In India, ostentation, self-love, vanity, or whatever term may be best fitted to the passion whose effects I mean to describe, has usurped as powerful a sway over the minds of the people, as in any circle of the globe ; and it is exemplified in various shapes, but in none more than in the foundation of public works. On observing once, a Hindoo of some distinction superintending the construction of a place of worship, I asked him why, in a country famed for its charitable benefactions, so many old edifices allotted to the purposes of religion and hospitality were permitted to fall to the ground, which, had they been repaired, large sums of money would have been saved, and many a valuable monument of antiquity rescued from oblivion. He candidly told me, that were he to expend his whole estate on repairs, the work would still retain the name of its original founder ; but by the erection of a new one, it would be transmitted to posterity in his own. By this register of fame, it should seem that the entire credit of constructing a pagoda, pond, or serauce, will be given to him who first raised the fabric, and no account taken of the occasional embellisher of such structures.— This digression hath prevented me from sooner informing you,

you, that to-day I lost my road; instead of simply going to Manickpour, my place of destination, I went to Kurrah Manickpour, where I passed a very unpleasant night. The air was intensely cold, and my servants who pursued the right road, carried with them my baggage and my purse. The good woman at the serauce, old, though very active, kindly provided a supper at the risk of not being paid, for I had advised her of the miscarriage; but she could procure no succedaneum for a quilt, so that I was kept shiveringly awake the whole night.

ADJOINING to the village of Kurrah Manickpour, on a hill, are the remains of a considerable fort. Amongst the ruins I observed some mutilated fragments of Hindoo sculpture, of the same style as that seen on a curious monument of ancient date in the neighbourhood of Benares. Festoons of flowers are sculptured on this monument, which for the simple elegance of the design and taste, as well as the exact nicety of the execution, may, in my opinion, vie with the works of European masters. The Hindoos of this day have a slender knowledge of the rules of proportion, and none of perspective. They are just imitators, and correct workmen; but they possess merely the glimmerings of genius.*

On the 23d, crossed the Ganges at Gootree, two miles below

* This observation is verified at a village opposite the city of Benares, at the gardens of Ramnagur, where Cheyt Sing has erected a large range of costly buildings, in some of which stone figures are placed, of very awkward dimensions and dull expression.

Kurrah

Kurrah Manickpour, and arrived at Mustaphabad, a stage of nine coffes. Almas Ali Khan is the manager or renter of a large tract of country lying on the south of the Ganges, which appears in a less desolate state than any other part of the Vizier's dominions which I have seen. From the ruins of Kurrah fort, the Ganges is seen winding beautifully round the bottom of the hill, and on the northern shore, immediately opposite, stands the village of Manickpour. I found my servants at Mustaphabad, to whom I referred the hospitable hostess, who had been obliged to accompany me so far, for payment of the last night's score.

ON the 24th,—at Bareilly, a fortified town, 12 coffes. The country from the last station is much covered with jungle,* and where the prospect opened, but little cultivation appeared, except in the districts of Almas, which are but comparatively well conditioned. I have seen only a land of desolation, exhibiting the scattered vestiges of former prosperity.

ON the 25th,—at Doolindy, 8 coffes. The principal town of a district, rented by one of the Viziers favorite Hindoos, who has laid out a large garden at this place, in which are two neat summer houses.

ON the 26,—at Saseindy, 10 coffes. There is little else to note than the wild appearance of a barren country; the reverse of what I expected to see in the vicinity of a capital city.

* All forest wood in India, is termed *jungle*.

ON the 27th,—at Lucknow, 8 coffes. I took a lodging in the Affroff serauce; and to prevent as much as possible the risk of discovery, I discharged all my servants, except one, on whom I could place a reasonable confidence.

LUCKNOW is a large and populous city, but wholly inelegant and irregular. The streets are narrow, uneven, and almost choaked up with every species of filth. The Goomty, running on the north side of the town, is navigable for boats of a common size at all seasons of the year, and falls into the Ganges between Benares and Ghazepour. A line of boats, extended across the river, forms a convenient communication with a large suburb. Shujah-ul-Dowlah made Fyzeabad, or Oude, the capital of his dominion; but his son, setting aside that, with many other of his father's arrangements, has fixed his residence at Lucknow.

PERCEIVING that some of my neighbours began to make inquisitive remarks, I went across the water, and procured a retired and commodious apartment in the Hussen Gunge serauce. Having some business to transact at Lucknow, previously to my journey to Europe, I left my servants at the serauce, on pretence of visiting the English camp, the general rendezvous of idle strangers, and went to the city. Being desirous of seeing a gentleman, who I understood was stationed there, I approached the door of an officer's quarter, and desired the servants to acquaint their master, that a Moghul merchant, of whom there are many at Lucknow, requested permission to see him. Though the entreaty was urged

urged in the softest and most persuasive tone within the compass of my speech, they flatly and roughly rejected it, saying that their master was eating his breakfast. Anxious to obtain the wanted information, I tried another door which seemed less closely guarded, but there also my prayer was preferred in vain; and having nothing in my pocket to strengthen the argument, I was obliged to retire; though the day was extremely hot, and the distance to my lodging was at least four miles. This occurrence, however productive of temporary inconvenience, gave me a satisfactory proof of the efficacy of my disguise, and the fluency of my Mahometan language. Many, I dare say, are the unfortunate plaintiffs in our Indian world, who unable to purchase a passage through the gates of the great, are thrust away by their rude and rapacious domestics.—In returning, I saw another European house, into which, by a fortunate change in the mode of application, I procured admittance: for on informing the door-keeper that my attendance had been required, I was immediately conducted to his master, who received me in the kindest manner, and on many future occasions shewed me marks of his friendship.—During my stay at Lucknow I lodged at the serauce, and though I remained there twenty days, in which time I made many visits to the English gentlemen, no one seemed to regard me with suspicion. My landlady at first expressed a strong desire of knowing the cause of my frequent excursions; but not receiving a satisfactory account, she concluded that I had formed some female intimacy. As this con-

jecture was favourable to my plan, I encouraged it in the mind of the good woman, who gave herself infinite credit for the discovery.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your's, &c. &c.

LET-

LETTER VI.

Lucknow, January 16th, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

BEFORE I leave the territories of Assoff-ud-Dowlah, or, as he is often entitled from the rank he holds, the Vizier of the Empire, I will throw together for your perusal some brief remarks on the Oude government.

THIS country is bounded on the north, by parts of Napaul and Siranagur ; on the east, by the English possessions ; on the south, by the Jumna ; and on the west, generally by the Doab, and the Ganges. The Oude territories, generally flat and fertile, are watered by the Ganges, Jumna, Gograh, Goomty, and Gunduck, exclusive of many rivulets. These rivers flow through most of the principal towns, and intersect a large space of the country ; most of them being navigable for boats, in all seasons of the year. — THE English armies may be plentifully supplied with provisions and ammunition, ⁱⁿ the event of executing any military operation in that quarter. These rivers also present strong barriers against the Mahrattah, Seick, or Moghul cavalry. The Vizier's provinces, which yield, it is said, at this period, a revenue of about two millions

lions sterling, have greatly decreased in produce since the death of Shujah-ud-Dowlah. It would be presumptuous in me to attempt an explanation of such decrease. It was sufficiently mortifying, to observe the common effects of a destructive administration. The inhabitants say, that the population of the country is diminished, and that the commerce, which in former periods was important and extensive, has fallen to decay. These evils which have contributed to the ruin of the most powerful states, and are now precipitating the ruin of Oude, can only be eradicated by the strenuous exertions of a just and wise governor : a character devoutly to be wished for in Oude. It appears, that a large portion of the amount now paid by Assoff-ud-Dowlah into the Company's treasury at Lucknow, is transported from thence in specie to relieve the necessities of Bengal, now urgent in the extreme. Much of the wealth also, which has been accumulated by the servants of the Company residing in this country, has been conveyed in a similar mode ; and the mischief gathers strength from the tenor of our present connection with Assoff-ud-Dowlah. The channels of commerce operate too tardily for measures which require dispatch, and embrace only the object of the day. If treasure can be procured, no secondary aids are called in ; no succedaneum is searched for. These drains, unsupplied by any native source, must soon exhaust the vigour of a country, where in addition to the grievance, commerce is loaded with monopoly, and influenced by the hand of power. The demand for bills on Bengal, which has been pressing and continued,

tinued, gave them often a value of seventeen and an half per cent. on the Lucknow amount; a profit which enabled the bankers to export the value in silver.*—The resumption of the Jaguir, or alienated lands, has not been productive of the promised benefits. The officers who enjoyed those benefactions, were many of them men of expensive manners; they promoted the consumption of valuable manufactures, and possessing rank and distinction, they maintained a numerous body of dependants. Whether from a succession of oppressive managers, or that the inhabitants do not experience the fruits of former liberality, it is evidently seen, that the resumed districts are ill cultivated, and thinly inhabited.

LITTLE remains to be said of the Vizier's military establishment; it being only useful in assisting the collection of the revenue, enforcing the obedience of the lesser vassals, or furnishing a guard for his person. The defence of the country wholly rests on the forces of the English, which are supplied according to emergency. The troops at this time, amount to about eight thousand sepoy, and five hundred Europeans, with the requisite train of artillery. The treasury of Affoff-ud-Dowlah is now low, but it is said, that he has nearly paid off the residue of a large debt, which had been accumulating since the period of his father's death. It is to be sincerely wished, that the measures pursued in future, may redress

* A flow of commerce, which now more diffusely conveys the manufactures of this country to Bengal, has reduced this premium to four per cent.

the

the grievances of this country; which though of such extensive compass, and possessing so valuable a resource, bears the aspect of rapid decay: and though its position, and native weakness, might render the alliance profitable to the English, no solid benefits have hitherto arisen from our connection with Oude.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LET-

LETTER VII.

Furruckabad, January 26th, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

I NOW beg to present you with a sketch of my route to Furruckabad, where I purpose resting two or three days with my countrymen, whom I shall not probably see again until my arrival in Europe.

ON the 18th at noon, I left my hostess's quarters at Lucknow, and after a warm and dusty ride of seven coffes, halted at the village of Nowill Gunge. The next day I arrived at Meahgunge, a stage also of seven coffes, and was much rejoiced to find that my little steed continued to possess high health and vigor. He is endowed, I fear, with a too great predominance of the latter quality, and that in its worst sense; for if I am to judge from his carnal hankerings, and strong neighings of love to every mare he sees, it would too plainly appear that his life has not been of the chastest kind. But as it is said, and in holy writ I believe, "that there is no wisdom under the girdle," meaning, evidently, the girdles of the lords and ladies of the creation, we may surely

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excuse

excuse the wanderings and frailties of a poor horse, whose passions receive no check from constitutional modesty, or virtuous example.

MEAHGUNGE, if I am informed right, was founded by Almas, and seems to be a thriving and populous village. From the various intelligence which I have procured, it is evident that the renter here is active, industrious, and regular. The inhabitants say, that his rigour in collecting the revenue is, in a certain degree, qualified by a steady observance of his contracts.—I passed this evening in the company of a Patan, who was returning to his home from Lucknow, where he had expended the greatest part of his estate in the society of the ladies, and in the pleasures of arrack; but in the last he very copiously indulged. In the course of two hours and a half, I beheld him with amazement empty two bottles of a spirit so harsh and fiery, that the like dose must have turned the head of an elephant. The Patan made an apology for this excessive potation, by observing, that it removed from his mind every sensation of sorrow and melancholy,—passions, which, he said greatly annoyed him in his cooler moments. This jovial Mahometan was attended by an old musician, marvellously ill apparelled, and deficient in the larger portion of his teeth, who during the interludes of his master's amusement, strummed on a miserable guitar, which he accompanied with some of Hafez's odes; but uttered in a voice that would have struck dismay into the fiercest beast that ranges the forest.

—At

—At this gunge, a servant whom I hired at Lucknow, and my only attendant, carried off, in the night, my matchlock and a curious dagger.

ON the 20th, at Banghur Mow — 10 coses — a large village in the district of Almas.—Here the Patan having drunk out all the substance of his purse, sold a piece of family tin-plate; the produce of which raised the sum of three rupees. He took that evening an extraordinary draught of his favourite spirit; and, that his pleasures might have no alloy, he called in a good-natured girl, who for one half-rupee displayed to the Patan a more ample fund of dalliance and allurements, than could be purchased by us for twenty at Lucknow.—He expressed a sovereign contempt for Almas,* who he said being precluded from the pleasures of the sex, disliked and discouraged them. Many of Almas's wounded sepoys were brought into the serauce from a fort in the woods, which had been reduced by him after a siege of six weeks. These men were shockingly mangled.—Some had balls lodged in their bodies, others were scorched by a combustible matter thrown on them during the attack.—Being possessed of a few medical materials, I applied dressings to such cases as could likely receive any benefit from the assistance; and I was pleased to observe the successful effects of some of the applications. The want of surgical help is an evil which affects, in a grievous manner, the native military service of Hindostan, especially since

* He is a eunuch.

the use of fire-arms has become so prevalent ; and it will be no exaggeration to say, that a greater number of the country troops are destroyed by the effects of wounds, than slain in immediate action.

AFTER a long journey of 14 coſſes, in which I croſſed the Ganges, and had nearly exhausted the ſtrength of my horſe, I arrived on the 21ſt at the ancient city of Kinnouge, ſituate on the Callinuady, a ſmall river that falls into the Ganges, about twenty miles below Furruckabad. Kinnouge, before the period of the Mahometan conqueſt, ranked amongſt the moſt populous and opulent cities of Hindoſtan. It is mentioned in teſtimony of its grandeur, that Kinnouge contained thirty thouſand ſhops for the ſale of betle, and afforded employment for ſix thouſand female dancers, and muſicians. — A vaſt maſs of ruins interſperſed through a wide ſpace, marks the ancient extent and grandeur of Kinnouge; though few diſtinct veſtiges now exiſt, except ſome parts of a ſtone temple erected in ancient times to the honor of Setah, the wife of Ram, which has been exorcised by ſome zealous Mahometan, and converted into a place of worſhip. The preſent race of Indian Mahometans not being fervent in the cauſe of religion, or being rather ſupinely regardleſs of it, (many of them holding the memory of Mahomet in as little reverence as they would that of Thomas-a-Becket, had they ever heard of him) the moſque is now defiled and abandoned. In ſeveral cavities which the rain has formed, I obſerved parts of brick wall, ſunk twenty feet at leaſt beneath

beneath the level of the town; and the inhabitants say, that in digging into the foundation, small pieces of gold and silver are often discovered. They also say, that Kinnouge was once destroyed by an inundation; but as few Hindoo records are divested of mythological story, slender uses only can be derived from them. The Mahrattas plundered this city, and laid waste the adjacent country, previously to the battle of Panifrett.* After this important event, which gave a strength and permanency to the Mahometan power in Upper India, Ahmed Khan Bungish, the chief of Furruckabad, took possession of the districts of Kinnouge, which during his administration, began to emerge from the ruin in which it had been long involved, and assumed symptoms of a recovery which are now wholly effaced.

ARRIVED on the 23d at Khodah Gunge,—nine coffes,—a village in the territory of Muzzuffer Jung, the adopted son of Ahmed Khan: but no more like the father,—excuse the phrase,—than “I am like Hercules.”—This young man, averse to, or incapable of business, is a tributary of Assof-ud-Dowlah, who by the high fine he has imposed on Furruckabad, may be said to govern it himself.

ON the 24th,—at Furruckabad—nine coffes.—Finding the pleasures of my Patan friend grow expensive, and very noisy, I

* It was fought in February, 1761.

took

took an easy leave of him, and slipped unperceived into the English artillery camp, where I am treated, as I have been in all parts of this hospitable country, with every mark of kindness.

I am, my Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

Rampore, February 5th, 1783,

MY DEAR SIR,

THE desire on every occasion of testifying the sense I entertain of your friendship, prompts me to give you the relation of my route from Furruckabad to Rampore.

THE progress of the first day, the 29th January, 1783, which was a long one,—not less than eighteen coffes,—brought me and my horse, both greatly jaded, to Kytterah ; a large village on the west side of the Ganges.

THE next day at Allahapour,—nine coffes.—This place not being a common stage, nor containing a serauce, my accommodations were slender, and those extorted by the force of bold language, and a few extra pence. At Allahapour there is only one house of entertainment, and that for the article of eating only ; — you may sleep where you can. After supper, I proposed to the landlady with every token of decorum, that we should lodge that night under the same roof. The dame misconstruing the purpose of my request, and fired with indignation

tion at the idea of its indecency, poured on me a torrent of reproach. In the exercise of the tongue a female of Hindostan hath few equals; and if she hath ever followed a camp, I would pronounce her invincible on any ground in Europe. An English woman, educated at our most noted seminaries, and skilled in all the various compass of debate, will, perhaps, on some interesting occasion, maintain the contest for an hour, which then terminates in blows and victory. But an Indian dame, improved by a few campaigns, has been known to wage a colloquial war, without introducing one manual effort, for the space of three successive days; sleeping and eating at reasonable intervals.* There is a fertility of imagination, a power of expression, inherent in the mind, and vocal ability, of an Asiatic, particularly a female one, which cannot be engendered in the cold head of an European: and there is an extent of language also peculiar to the East, which the limits of Western speech do not contain.—Let me not forget the story of my landlady, whose words, shrill and piercing, yet seem to vibrate in my ear.—With every symptom of a virulent female pride, and the semblance of outrageous virtue, she declared that I should not sleep under her roof,—I might, if I liked, place my bed on the out-side of the door.—Finding the night growing cold, and not being impressed with sentiments of respect for mine hostess, whose

* Such prolonged engagements are distinguished by the particular term of "*bauffy Lerhay*," or the stale war.

person

person had **nothing** lovely in it, I planted my bed somewhat rudely in the midst of her apartment, telling her, she might dispose of herself as **she** ~~seemed~~ most fitting, but that my deportment would be chaste, and consistent with the rules of honor, though appearances might be unfavourable. The good woman perceiving my inattention to her clamorous representation, was glad to compound the matter, and take a small pecuniary compensation, for the injury her character might suffer.

ON the next day I went to Badam, a station of eight **coffes**.—Badam is said to have been founded four hundred years ago, by one of the Seljukian kings; and from a magnificent extensive city, is now sunk into a small mouldering town. The ruins of the fort still serve to exhibit a mortifying picture of former grandeur; but such is the reverse of its condition, that the howling wolf, and the screeching owl, now become its only tenants, have supplanted the gay damsel, and the care soothing minstrel. Then, my friend, ere thy youthful blood ceases to run lightly through its now elastic channels,—ere thy mind refuses longer to receive the glowing tints of fancy's pencil,—seize the fair pleasures of the hour, and following the precepts of **our** Hafez, leave the rest to fate!—I passed this evening in the **company** of the fair, (though the epithet may not literally **apply** to our Indian ladies), who, for a moderate offering, sung, laughed, and danced around me until mid-night.

ON the 1st of February, after a tedious journey of fourteen

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coffes,

coffes, leading through a lonely unhospitable country, I arrived at Owlah.—Of the few fellow-travellers pursuing the the same track, two wolves, a fox, and two hares, composed the greater number. The shrubs and high grafs had so concealed the path, that I was completely bewildered, and had lost my way, when a small village on an eminence attracted my notice, and held out the prospect of relief: but such is the instability of sublunary pleasure, that this promising mark proved a false beacon. The hamlet was unroofed, and its inhabitants had sought a more friendly land. Then, in the bitterness of my heart, I gave up Shujah-ud-Dowlah to as many devils as chose to take him, and was about consigning the English to the same crew, for having expelled from a country which they had made populous and opulent, the extensive tribe of Rohillas. How insatiable, cruel, and how destructive, even of its own purposes, appears ambition, when placed in this light. It prompted a prince, already possessed of an ample fair territory, to seize, with barely the colour of pretence, the domain of his neighbours, who by a salutary system of government, had enriched their country, and had made their names respected. The conqueror, by the fortune of war, subjects into a province this flourishing territory, which is soon converted into desolate plains, and deserted villages. This is not, I trust, the language of exaggeration, or the colouring of fancy. It is a simple, grievous truth, forcing itself on the notice of the most cursory observer.—The town of Owlah, once crowded with inhabitants, and adorned with mosques and spacious buildings,

buildings, is now verging to ruin, and many of its streets are choaked up with fallen habitations.

ON the 2d of February, at Shahabad,—fourteen coffes,—a large village in the districts of Fyze-ullah-Khan. The whole of this chief's country evinces the beneficial effects arising from the encouragement of husbandry, and the aid of an active government. Populous villages, skirted by extensive fields of corn, are seen on all sides ; and the haughty independent spirit which invariably pervades every class of the people, mark their abhorrence of despotism. Many of the Rohillas, who had been driven from the country after the death of Hafiz Rhamut, have settled in this quarter.

ON the 3d, at Rampour,—fourteen coffes. Fyze-ullah-Khan, resides in this town, which the general resort of his civil and military officers, has now made populous, and wealthy.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your's, &c. &c.

[The following history of the Rohillas, and Shujah-ud-Dowlah, compiled since the date of the letters, is founded on sundry original documents, and various local information, obtained during my residence in the northern parts of India, and has been introduced in this place, though interrupting the series of the letters, to bring into one view, a body of relative facts.]

H I S T O R Y

O F T H E

R O H I L L A S.*

IT appears, that about the year 1720, Bish-arut Khan, and Daoud Khan, of the tribe of Rohillas, accompanied by a small number of their needy and adventurous countrymen came into Hindostan in quest of military service. They were first entertained by a Madar Saha, the Hindoo chief of Scrouly,† who, by robbery and predatory excursions, maintained a large party of banditti. In the plunder of an adjacent village, Daoud Khan

* This appellation, I have been informed, is derived from *Roh*, a word in the Afghan language signifying a hill or mountain; and is the name also of a certain tract of territory, the native country of the Rohillas, situated between Peshour and Cabul.

† A small town in the north-west quarter of Rohilcund.

captured

captured a youth of the Jatt sect,* whom he adopted, and brought up in the Mahometan faith, by the name of Ali Mahomet ; and though he had children born to him in marriage, Daoud Khan distinguished this boy by pre-eminent marks of parental affection. Madar Saha assigned to the body of Rohillas, which soon increased, certain lands† for their maintenance. Goolareah and some other villages, were given to Bishtarut Khan ; and Daoud Khan obtained Burneah and Beouly.‡

WHILST the Rohillas were yet in this limited state, Shah Alum Khan, an Afghan Mollah,§ visited his countrymen in India; and it is said that he had particular claims of friendship on Daoud Khan, being either the adoptive father of that chief, or having afforded him in his youth the means of subsistence. In whatever relation the Mollah stood to Daoud Khan, it is allowed that he was hospitably treated at Beouly ; and on returning to Afghanistan, was furnished with a sum of money for defraying the expences of his journey. Shah Alum came a second time to Kuthair,|| where

* This sect, a numerous and powerful one in the northern parts of India, is classed in the fourth, or Snodes, tribe of the Hindoos.

† The Rohilla officers who stood next in authority to those chiefs, were Caim Khan, Shadie Khan, Permaul Khan, Sultan Khan, and Azum Khan Dhunghlah.

‡ Villages situated in the districts of Sullawce, a division of Rohilcund, which lies 40 computed miles to the westward of Bareilly. — See Rennel's map.

§ Mollah is an appellation given to those who are skilled in the religious doctrine and laws of Mahomet.

|| The original name of a part of Rohilcund, previously to the period of the Rohilla conquest, and still adopted in the public registers of the country.

he

he again experienced the generosity of Daoud Khan; but on going back to his country, he was killed, and his effects were plundered. It has been said, that this assassination was committed at the instigation of Daoud Khan, in revenge of some haughty expressions of the Mollah to that chief. I have been wholly prompted to make this mention of Alum Khan, from his being the father of Hafiz Rhamut, who in latter times became so conspicuous and unfortunate.

THE Rohillas, quarrelling with Madar Saha, retired from his country, and associating themselves with Chand Khan, the chief of Bareilly,* they jointly entered into the service of Azmuth Khan, the Governor of Moradabad.† They did not remain long attached to this officer, but moving towards the northern mountains they made incursions into the territory of the Rajah of Cummaoun. Chand Khan had previously refused to proceed on this expedition with the Rohillas, who after various success, were wholly worsted. The Rohillas had penetrated into the interior country, but being surrounded on all sides by the mountaineers, who cut off their supply of provision, they were compelled to submit to disgraceful terms of releasement. The persons of Daoud

* Bareilly, a spacious well built town, in the centre of Rohilcund. — See Rennel's map.

† A town formerly of great note, situate in the northern part of Rohilcund. — See Rennel's map.

‡ A spacious tract of mountainous country, subject to a Hindoo Chief; and forming the north-east boundary of Rohilcund.

Khan,

Khan, and Ali Mahomet, were delivered to the Rajah, who put the former to death; and the like fate would have awaited the son, had he not made his escape. The Rohillas say, that Daoud Khan was not surrendered to the chief of Cummaïoun, but slain by a party of mountaineers, who had attacked him by surprize. The Rohilla party after this disaster withdrew to Beouly and Burneah, where they had, antecedently to the Cummaïoun expedition, lodged their families; and in a short space of time it is seen, that they seized on the districts of Madar Saha, their first master, who fell in one of the desultory actions that followed this invasion. Ali Mahomet, after the death of Daoud Khan, had been declared chief* of the party; nor did he, though then a youth, seem unworthy of the charge. He was brave, enterprizing, and never failed to improve the occasions of advancing his power and enlarging his territory.—An eunuch who resided at Munounah,† and managed the affairs of those omrahs of the court who held granted lands in Kuthair, had incited Ali Mahomet, from some motive of resentment, to invade the possessions of the chief of Owlah; which were soon reduced by the Rohillas, and ultimately an-

* Mahomet Khan, the son of Daoud Khan, either from being superseded in his father's affection by Ali Mahomet, or at the period of Daoud Khan's death, being excluded by the Rohilla officers from the succession, retired to Furruckabad, where he was received into the Bunglish family. It is mentioned also in a manuscript which I have seen, that at the time of his father's death, Mahomet Khan was an infant, and that he remained some years in the family of Ali Mahomet.

† A town in Rohilcund.

nexted

nexed to their territory. Ali Mahomet found, which he had sought for, a pretext to quarrel with the eunuch, whom he engaged,* and flew in a pitched battle; the success of which, invested him with the estates of the nobles, and a large booty. Ali Mahomet, chiefly by the assistance of the Vizier Kummer ud Dein, not only made his peace at court, but obtained a commission for collecting the revenue of the pension lands, which it is said he punctually remitted.†

From this period, may be dated the first important establishment of the Rohilla power in Rohilcund: a name by which they distinguished the Kuthair districts, and their other territories on the east side of the Ganges. Azmut Ulla Khan‡ being removed from the government of Moradabad, Hunund, an Hindoo officer of note, was ordered to proceed to that place, and exterminate the government of the Rohillas. It appears, that Omdut Ul-Mulck,§ a powerful omrah at the court of Mahomet Shah, advised and promoted this measure, in revenge of the death of the eunuch, who had been his agent in the management of an extensive Jaguir,

* The battle in which the eunuch was slain, happened in 1727.

† An act of such avowed rebellion, committed within almost the precincts of the court, marks an epocha of the decline of the Mogul Empire, and conspicuously shews, that the power and vigor which had rendered its arms invincible under Acbar, and Aurungzêbe, no longer existed.

‡ In some papers recording Rohilla history, it is mentioned, that Azmut Ullah was forcibly deprived of his Government by Ali Mahomet.

§ This officer was also known by the name of Amir Khan.

which he held in the districts of Munounah and Owlah. The forces of Hunund were encountered by the Rohillas under the command of Ali Mahomet,* and wholly defeated. Hunund, together with his son, fell in battle ; and the districts of Moradabad, with those of Bareilly, were seized on by Ali Mahomet.—About this time Azim Khan Dungheah, a Rohilla who had been employed in the service of the zemindar of Peleabeat,† joined Ali Mahomet ; whom it is said he urged to invade the possessions of his late master. The Rohilla, who embraced with eagerness every opportunity of extending his conquests, and acquiring plunder, attacked the Hindoo, and drove him from his residence. After the death of Hunund, it is mentioned, though without any accurate detail of facts, and a total omission of date, that Meer Munnoo, the son of the Vizier Kummer ud Dein, was sent into Rohilkund with an army to compel Ali Mahomet to account for the Rohilkund revenue, and to restore the artillery which had been attached to the troops of Hunund. Ali Mahomet met Meer Munnoo at a passage of the Ganges near Daranaghur,‡ where an adjustment was effected ; and the daughter of the Rohilla, it is also said given to Meer Munnoo's brother in marriage. No other dates are

* This event happened A. D. 1740, the year after Nadir Shah's invasion of India.

† A town in the north east quarter of Rohilkund, near the foot of a woody range of hills.—Vide Rennel's map.

‡ A town on the bank of the Ganges, in the north west quarter of Rohilkund.—See Rennel's map.

affixed

affixed to the arrival of Hafiz, Rhamut Khan* in India, than that he joined his countrymen during the administration of Ali Mahomet; who being desirous of effacing any resentment that he might harbour for the murder of Alum Khan, quickly advanced this chief to an important station. Dhoondy Khan, a nephew of Alum Khan, who probably came to Rohilcund about the same period, was also much favored by Ali Mahomet. Actuated more perhaps by the desire of conquest, than retaliating former disgrace, Ali Mahomet invaded Cummaïoun, which he over-run, and compelled the chief to take refuge in the Serinagur country.† He amassed a large booty in this expedition, which was concluded by the exaction of an annual tribute; and Rohilla troops were stationed in the forts of Cashipour and Rooderpour, dependencies of Cummaïoun, which he kept possession of, to record, it is said, the revenge that had been taken for the murder of his father.

ALI Mahomet, who resided chiefly at Owlah, established throughout his territory a permanent system of government, which though occasionally rigorous, afforded a general protection to the lower class of people. Surdar Khan, who had approved himself in many actions a brave soldier, was appointed to the

* Hafiz Rhamut, some documents say, first came into India in the character of a merchant.

† An Hindoo territory, bounding Rohilcund on the north.

command of the army ; and certain lands were granted him for his maintenance. Futtah Khan,* with a comfortable donation, was created the public treasurer, and keeper of the household stores. Peleabeat and Bareilly were given to Hafiz Rhamut ; and Moradabad, to Dhoondy Khan. Ali Mahomet seems to have held the imperial authority at this period in a low degree of estimation, for he openly seized on some valuable commodities, which the Governor of Bengal had dispatched, by the road of Rohilcund, to court, for the use of the King. Setting also at defiance the power of Sufdah Jung, the Subahdar of Oude, he plundered a large quantity of valuable timber that had been cut down for his use in the northern parts of Rohilcund. Sufdar Jung, who had ever been inimical to the late Conquerors of Kuthair, acquired a sufficient influence over Mahomet Shah,† to induce that Prince to attack Ali Mahomet. The Rohillas were secretly supported by the Vizier Kummer ud Dein, who, bore an inveterate hatred to the Subahdar of Oude ; and who, in the usage of the courtiers of that day, strengthened his party by every powerful connection that he could procure.

* Futtah Khan, originally a Hindoo, was adopted by Ali Mahomet. The usage of male adoption prevails even in Mahometan families where there are many sons.

† Sufdar Jung chiefly persuaded Mahomet Shah to undertake this expedition, by a stipulation of paying one lack of rupees for every marching, and half a lack for every halting day, of the Imperial army, until its arrival in Rohilcund.

THE

THE King entered Rohilcund with a great force,* and without coming to an engagement, possessed himself of the open country. Ali Mahomet, aware of his inability to resist the King's army, and feeling perhaps a reluctance to face his Sovereign in the field, had retired into the woods of Banghur,† the skirts of which were defended by a chain of forts that had been erected by the Rohillas at a former period. Ali Mahomet maintained this post for some time, but having no hope of relief, and being scantily supplied with provisions, he surrendered himself into the hands of the King; and at the intercession of Kummer ud Dein, was pardoned.

THE power of the Rohillas was now annihilated in Rohilcund, and all their officers and principal people were removed to Dehli. This remarkable event, which happened in the year 1745, shews that Ali Mahomet must have been essentially aided by the distracted state of the empire, during the Persian invasion, in the increase and establishment of his dominion. It appears that he remained about a year at Dehli, under the immediate protection of the Vizier, when at that nobleman's recommendation, he was appointed the military governor of Sirhend, and ordered to reduce the

* During the campaign of Mahomet Shah in Rohilcund, he gave to the Shote river the name of Yaa Wuffadar, or faithful friend, from the great conveniences derived by his army from this stream, whose waters are salubrious, and flow in a beautifully winding course

† These woods lie between Owlah and Rampore.—Vide Rennel's map

former

former chief of that place, who had thrown off his allegiance to the empire. Previously to his proceeding on this service, Ali Mahomet had been required to send Abed-ullah and Fyze-ullah, two of his sons, to Labore,* to be kept as hostages for the good conduct of the father. The Rohilla, who on every occasion displayed the ability and spirit of a soldier, defeated the Sirhend rebel, and reduced to his subjection Kote Roy, one of the strongest fortresses in the upper part of India. During the residence of Ali Mahomet at Sirhend, his party, which had been joined by a body of two or three thousand marauding Afghans, was computed at ten thousand cavalry, and fifteen or twenty thousand infantry of various denominations. The Rohilla did not take any part in the Durany war;† but whilst the Moghul and Afghan armies were approaching to action, he quitted the Panjab and retired to Hurdwar, from whence he penetrated in 1747 into Rohilcund, which he rapidly conquered. The two sons of Ali Mahomet, who had been delivered as hostages for his good conduct, were taken by Ahmed Shah, the Durany, in the fort of Sirhend; where they had been placed by Kummur ud Dein, previously to the reduction of that town by the Afghans. Ali Mahomet could not long have enjoyed the fruits of his last success; for his death, according to the

* Meer Munnoo, the son of the Vizier, was at that time the Governor of Labore.

† The first invasion of the Durany Ahmed Shah.

memoirs of that time, happened in the latter end of 1747,* at Owlah.

PERHAPS no soldier that has appeared in India, passed through more active and eventful scenes of life, than Ali Mahomet. He was born, and grew up it may be said, amidst the din of arms. He fell when a boy into the hands of Daoud Khan. An incessant series of warfare occupied his manhood, and he died at the period of finally subduing the territory, which he had before arduously fought for, conquered, and had lost.—This chief bore the reputation of a liberal encourager of agriculture and commerce. He was strict and rigorous in the exactions which he levied from his subjects; but as he rarely infringed, he never remitted a stipulated engagement. Owlah, his usual place of residence, and the principal town of Rohilcund, he ornamented with numerous public and private edifices, which were constructed and arranged with an order and taste seldom seen in Indian cities.

SAUD Ullah Khan, the third son† of Ali Mahomet, succeeded to the supremacy of the Rohilla Dominion. In obedience to the last counsel of his father, who had recommended Hafiz Rhamut to his young successor,‡ as the most capable of the Rohillas, Saud Ullah appointed that officer his deputy in the management of pub-

* Or the beginning of 1748.

† The two elder were yet kept in confinement by the Durannies.

‡ At his father's death, Saud Ullah was about twelve years of age.

he affairs. During the administration of Saud Ullah, the Patans of Furruckabad, commanded by their chief, Caim Khan Bung-hish, invaded Rohilcund. Confident of success, and presuming on the military reputation which he had acquired, the Patan precipitately quitted the body of his army, and advanced with a party of his principal officers. A detachment of Rohillas in ambuscade, fired at Caim Khan as he passed, and killed him, with some other persons of his retinue. The army, on the death of their leader, fled, leaving the baggage and guns behind, which were captured by the Rohillas, and estimated at a great value. Saud Ullah, said at that time to be fourteen years of age, had accompanied the army on this expedition.* Sufdar Jung still retaining a strong animosity to the Rohillas, and desirous of improving the occasion of Saud Ullah's minority, formed a junction with Mulhar Row, the chief of a large body of Marhatta cavalry, and penetrated into Rohilcund. The Rohillas, unable to resist so large a force, took shelter in the skirts of the northern mountains, where they remained, until some revolutions at court caused Sufdar Jung to move towards Dehli. He carried with him the strength of his own, and the

* The invasion of Caim Khan happened in the latter end of 1749. It appears that Mahomet Khan, the son of Daoud Khan, who had taken refuge at Furruckabad, accompanied Caim Khan on the expedition, and fell in the action. In the course of the same year, an officer named Kuttib-ud-Dein, the son or grand son of Azmut Ullah Khan, was appointed by the court to the Government of Moradabad, and entered Rohilcund with an army which was encountered and defeated by the Rohillas.

auxiliary army,* stationing in Rohilcund, a detachment for the purpose of maintaining possessions of the districts he had conquered: the Rohillas did not long continue in concealment, but collecting their scattered forces, they expelled the remaining troops of Sufdar Jung.

It appears that about the year 1750, the two elder sons of Ali Mahomet, having been enlarged by Admed Shah Dourany, came into Rohilcund, and solicited a portion of the paternal estate. Their claims were submitted to the deliberation of the principal Rohilla officers, among whom Hafiz took the lead, and it was resolved that the territory which had been personally possessed by Ali Mahomet, should be divided amongst his sons.† Violent disputes soon arose amongst the brothers, in the detail of which, little accuracy is observed by the writers of the tracts, that have come into my possession: nor would the relation, consisting of perplexed scenes of treachery and intrigue, tend to forward the general plan of this treatise. It will be sufficient to say, that the Rohilla chiefs, aware of the difficulties that affected the late arrangement, and dissatisfied at the conduct of Abed Ullah Khan, the eldest of the bro-

* It is mentioned, that the Marhattas withdrew from Rohilcund, on receiving a bond of fifty lacks of rupees from the Rohillas; and it should seem, that they made the non-payment of this bond an ostensible cause for invading Rohilcund, in the years 1772 and 1773.

† Ali Mahomet had six sons, Abed Ullah Khan, Fyze-Ullah Khan, Saud Ullah, Mahomet Yar Khan, Allah Yar Khan, and Martaza Khan.

thers, united in force, and expelled him with some other branches of the family from Rohilcund. Fyze-Ullah Khan, the second son of Ali Mahomet, obtained, after the expulsion of Abed Ullah, the districts of Rampour; which his prudent wary conduct has preserved to this day, though he has been involved in a series of domestic feuds, and was once invested and reduced to extreme distress by a powerful army.* The districts which had been allotted to Abed Ullah, for a short time considered the ruling chief, were now bestowed on Saud Ullah Khan: who again rose to his former superiority of station. Hafiz Ahmed, having acquired by his office, military ability, and genius, and his extensive influence in Rohilcund, gradually diminished, and at length wholly superseded, the authority of Saud Ullah, who assenting to the offer of a pension,† Hafiz was avowedly advanced to the supreme administration of affairs. The cause of this revolution is ascribed to the indolent and dissipated genius of Saud Ullah, who, it was represented by the party of Hafiz, would soon waste the resources of the country, and entail a disgrace on the nation. Without searching into remoter motives, it may be directly imputed to the ambition of Hafiz, who no longer held in remembrance the hand that had raised him to honours, and had committed a son to his protection; but rent without a scruple every bond that confined his schemes of

* The combined army of English and Shujah-ud-Doulah, in 1774.

† It is said that the other chiefs contributed to this payment, which amounted to eight lacks of rupees per annum.

grandeur.

grandeur. Hafiz Rhamut had borne a part in the actions of his countrymen in India; he had seen that no limits are affixed to power, and that no duties, prescribed for the guidance of men, impede the strides of ambition. The death of Saud Ullah Khan, which happened in 1761, at Owlah, contributed to fix the power of Hafiz Rhamut, and relieved him from his proportioned payment of the sum, that had been assigned for the maintenance of that chief.

THE want of established facts for describing in regular order the History of the Rohillas, confined me to the use of such materials, as immediately mark their military progress, or lead to the essential changes of their government. In my Rohilla papers it is mentioned, that on Sufdar Jung's death,* Ghaze-ud-Dein, the Vizier of the Empire,† joined by Ahmed Khan Bungush,‡ marched an army into Oude, and commenced hostilities against Shujah-ud-Dowlah, who had refused to make any pecuniary acknowledgments to the court on the event of his accession, or render an account of the personal estate of his father.§ Shujah-ud-Dowlah, aware of his inability to resist this attack alone, solicited the aid of the Rohilla states, who assenting to the request, came into Oude

* He died in the year 1754.

† Ahmed Shah then sat on the throne of Delhi.

‡ The Navaab of Furruckabad.

§ In Mahometan states, the prince on the death of a subject, becomes the heir of his property; which is often remitted to the family on the payment of a moderate fine.

with a large force. The Rohilla chiefs ultimately effected a cessation of hostility between the contending parties; and being chosen to decide on the claims preferred by Ghaze-ud-Dein, it was stipulated, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah should appropriate certain districts of the annual value of five lacks of rupees, to the use of the Imperial family. Nor was this engagement acceded to by Ghaze-ud-Dein, until Saud Ullah Khan had agreed to become security for its performance.*—Saud Ullah Khan, in 1760, had accompanied the Rohilla army to the relief of Najeb Khan, one of the Rohilla chiefs, who was invested by a body of Mahrattas at Sookertal; † and this appears to be the last public act which Saud Ullah performed.

THAT you may view more comprehensively the situation of the Rohillas at the period of Saud Ullah's death, it is necessary to lay before you a brief description of those officers; who at that time held possessions in Rohilcund.

Dhoondy Khan, in the partition of lands which were assigned to the chiefs, obtained the districts of the Bissouly, Morababad, Chaundpore, and Sumbul.‡ He died previously to the Rohilla war, 1774, leaving three sons, the eldest of whom, Mohubbullah

* It was on this occasion, I believe, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah and Saud Ullah made an exchange of their turbans. This ceremony is observed by the Mahometans in India as a pledge of friendship, and sometimes it is practised in the ratification of treaties.

† The name of a village, and ford of the Ganges. — See Rennell's Map.

‡ Towns in Rohilcund.—See Rennell's Map.

Khan,

Khan, succeeded to the largest portion of his territory.* Mullah Surdar Khan, to whom the districts of Sunejah Kote,† and some other adjacent lands had been assigned, left six sons; amongst whom dissensions arising about the division of the inheritance, the two eldest, Ahmed Khan and Mahomet Khan, had recourse to arms, for the decision of the contest. Ahmed Khan, supported by Hafiz Rhamut, defeated his brother in an action, and took him prisoner.‡ Futtah Khan, one of the early associates of Ali Mahomet, who had accumulated much wealth from the office§ he had so long filled, held the districts of Bandaum, Aufsete, and Heshinpour.|| This officer, who died before the expulsion of the Rohillas, was succeeded in the territorial property, by his eldest son Ahmed Khan.¶ The widow of Saud Ullah Khan, held in high estimation for a liberality of disposition and pious deportment, resided in the town of Owlah, which had been by the consent of the chiefs, committed to her immediate charge. After the

* This chief, confiding in an engagement made with the Vizier, in which it was stipulated that he should not be molested by the combined army, did not appear in arms during the Rohilla War, 1743. But the Vizier violating the agreement, stripped him of his territory and treasure.

† Situate at the distance of forty-four computed miles to the westward of Bareilly. Vide Rennell's Map

‡ Ahmed Khan commanded part of the Rohilla army in the war, 1774.

§ Futtah Khan held the office of treasurer, a master of the household.

|| Towns lying in the west and south quarters of Rohilcund.

¶ Ahmed Khan, the son of Futtah Khan, after the defeat of the Rohillas in 1774, joined the army of Fyze Ullah, at Laldong, and retired with that chief to Rampour.

death

death of Saud Ullah, when the common authority of the government had devolved on Hafiz Rhamut, it is not seen that the Rohilla arms were extensively employed, or that any important revolution affected their state. They had previously to the Vizier's invasion of Rohilcund, carried on a desultory war with the Mahrattas, and seized on certain of their districts in the Duab, which continued a short time in the Rohilla possession. The Mahrattas who afterwards came in great force, expelled the Rohillas from the Duab, and laid waste the eastern quarter of Rohilcund. As a short history of the life of Shujah-ud-Dowlah will be annexed in which the principal events of the Rohilla war are noticed, a discussion of them in this place becomes unnecessary.

THE form of government adopted by the Rohillas in India, of near affinity to that which exists in their native country, may be denominated feudal. The successors of Daoud Khan possessing slender hereditary pretensions, and surrounded by the men who had essentially aided in the first conquest, held but a limited sway. Sundar Khan and Futtah Khan, two of the most respectable of the Rohillas, never ceased to oppose the progress of Hafiz Rhamut, which was conspicuously directed to sovereign rule; and by a zealous attachment to the party of Saud Ullah's widow, who was beloved by the people, they formed a moderate counterpoise to the encroaching power of that chief. Here it becomes my duty, whether as the compiler of Rohilla tracts, or a recorder of common fame, to briefly delineate the character

character of Hafiz Rhamut. Born and reared to manhood in a country,* where its people are taught to consider a military as the only laudable profession, and that the sword conveys an irreproachable title to every acquisition, Hafiz Rhamut, constitutionally brave, became an enterprising soldier. His government was founded on the common basis of an active system; but flourished from the knowledge he possessed of its resources. He seems to have maintained a general good faith in public transactions, and though in the attainment of power he trampled on another's right, his genius and valor preserved the allegiance, and perhaps the love of his people; who saw in him a master, whose hand was equally prompt to indulgence or protection. And here I am impelled to say, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah alone, would never have dared Hafiz to the field. Hafiz Rhamut, like most of the chiefs or princes of a country, where succession falls to the strongest arm, was unfortunate in his family: Enayat Khan his eldest son, took up arms against him, was defeated, and obliged to seek shelter with Shujah-ud-Dowlah, in whose army he served at the Battle of Buxar.† Dissentions had arisen also amongst the descendants of the other Rohilla officers, which involved the country in general commotion, and on the arrival of the united forces of the English and Shujah-ud-Dowlah in Rohilcund, the

* Afghanistan.

† He afterwards returned to Rohilcund, where he died before the last Rohilla war.

chiefs

chiefs appeared to dread the encrease of each others power, more than the invasion of an enemy.

I WILL conclude this treatise, by observing, that the Afghan conquerors of Rohilcund, were a rapacious, bold, and lawless race of men ; and it should seem, that after they had established a government in India, they adopted the more effeminate vices of the south, and became intriguing, deceitful, and treacherous. The Rohillas, especially the lower classes, were, with but few exceptions, the only sect of Mahometans in India who exercised the profession of husbandry ; and their improvements of the various branches of agriculture, were amply recompensed by the abundance, and superior quality of the productions of Rohilcund.*

THE actions of Najeb Khan, those especially which occupied the latter periods of his life, bearing a close relation to the history of Rohilcund, I have given them a separate place in the treatise ; which as it represents him in a more conspicuous light, will afford me the sensible pleasure of offering up a tribute of respect and applause, to the memory of a brave liberal soldier, and a statesman of distinguished ability.

NAJEB Khan, the nephew of the Bishtarut Khan, mentioned in the Rohilla sketches, came into Rohilcund during the administration of Ali Mahomet, He was at first, appointed to the charge of a

* This country is said to have yielded to the Rohillas, one million sterling, which is now reduced by the injudicious management of the Nair, to thirty, or at most, forty thousand pounds.

very

very small party, not consisting, it is said, of more than twelve horse and foot. But his courage and activity soon brought him into the notice of Ali Mahomet, who entrusted him with a respectable military command, and procured for him in marriage the daughter of Dhoondy Khan. Whilst Ali Mahomet governed the Sirhend districts, Najeb Khan, who had followed his fortunes, rendered him an important service, in reducing to obedience a refractory Hindoo chief of that quarter. After the return of the Rohillas into Rohilcund, Dhoondy Khan bestowed the districts of Duranaghur and Chaundpour, which had been granted to him in the original division of Rohilcund, on Najeb Khan, who did not long confine himself within this narrow limit ; but crossing the Ganges, he made depredations on the territory of the Goojers,* as far as Ghous Ghur and Sarunpour.†

ON the death of Mahomet Shah,‡ Sufdar Jung avowedly announced his hostile disposition to the court, which was then wholly directed by the Vizier Ghaze-ud-Dein, and prepared to lead an army to Dehli. Sufdar Jung prevailed on the Rohilla chiefs, ever ready to draw the sword in the pursuit of plunder or conquest, to join his army, which had advanced to the neighbourhood

* A sect of Hindoos, in upper India, of the fourth tribe, who equally exercise the profession of agriculture, and arms.

† Vide Rennell's map.

‡ Mahomet Shah died in A. D. 1747, and was succeeded by his son Ahmed Shah.

of Dehli • when an Hindoo* officer of the court, attached to the interests of Ghaze-ud-Dein, induced Najeb Khan, by high offers of advancement, to secede from the combination, and espouse the imperial cause. — Alarmed at this defection, the residue of the Rohilla troops, commanded by Hafiz Rhamut, retired into their own country. Najeb Khan was honourably received by Ghaze-ud-Dein, and being soon after promoted to the command of the army, he attacked Sufdar Jung, and compelled him to cross the Ganges. On the successful conclusion of this campaign, in which the Rohilla was wounded, he received from the King the title of Najeb-ud-Dowlah.

SUBSEQUENTLY to this event, he moved with a strong body of troops into Rohilcund, where he established, in the districts which formerly pertained to him, a fixed government ; and though he disclaimed a dependance on Hafiz Rhamut, he was considered a political member of the Rohilla state. From a powerful support at court, and the distinguished popularity of his character, Najeb-ud-Dowlah was feared and envied by Hafiz, who saw in the growing influence of this chief, a mortifying diminution of his own. A mutual enmity soon produced hostilities, which ultimately involved the whole body of the Rohillas in a civil war.

ON the commencement of the dissensions, Saud Ullah Khan, the nominal head of the Rohilla states, had embraced the party

* Named Devi Sing.

of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, which he was compelled to abandon by the superior power of Hafiz Rhamut, and his partisans, who possessing the resources of the country, could indulge or distress him at pleasure. Najeb-ud-Dowlah, perceiving his inability to combat so formidable an opposition, retired from Rohilcund, and again attached himself to the service of the court. After his arrival in Dehli, he was either directed by the ministry, or he solicited permission, to reduce the Mahometan governor of Sarunpour,* who maintained a forcible possession of that quarter, and had refused to render any account of the imperial portion of the revenue. The enemy retiring on the approach of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, the districts of Sarunpour and Ghous Ghur became an easy acquisition. The activity and enterprize of this officer, who now commanded an approved body of soldiers, prompted him again to cross the Ganges, and seize on his former possessions, to which he annexed the lands of Tillalabad. In the northern division of this new conquest he founded the town Najebabad,† which in a short time was filled with commodious and beautiful structures, and became the centre of an extensive commerce. At the distance of a mile from the town, he erected the fort of Najeb Ghur,‡ where the adjacent inhabitants, in the event of war, might deposit their

* This town stands on the northern part of the Duab, and is at this time held by Gholam Kauder Khan, the grandson of Najeb-ud-Dowlah.

† Situate in the northern divisions of Rohilcund. — Vide Rennell.

‡ This fort is also called Patter Ghur.

property, and find also a security for their persons. A want of more precise dates, which I have in vain searched for, has thrown a confusion and perplexity on the preceding actions of Najeb-ud-Dowlah : but it is now seen that in the year 1757,* this officer was promoted to the station of Meer Bucksy, with the title of Amir-ul-Omrah, at the instance of Ghaze-ud-Dein ; who in 1753, having deposed and deprived of sight Ahmed Shah, raised to the throne Alumguir Sani, the father of the present Emperor.

WHEN the Durannies entered† Hindostan, in their fourth expedition to participate in the wreck of the Empire, Najeb-ud-Dowlah, who was himself an Afghan,‡ and aware of the superior power of Ahmed Shah, attached himself without reserve to the fortunes of that prince ; dissolving the connection he had formed with Ghaze-ud-Dein, without hesitation, or an honorable regard for the favours he had received from the hand of that minister. The return of Ahmed Shah§ into his own country, enabled the Mahrattas to exercise an almost undivided authority in the upper provinces of

* Dow's History of Hindostan. In the Khazanahee Omah, a Persian book which treats cursorily of the actions of the late Emperors of Hindostan, it is said, that Najeb-ud-Dowlah was appointed to this office by Ahmed Shah Duranny. I have followed Dow's History, from the probability that Najeb-ud-Dowlah would receive his commission from the Court, under whose authority he acted.

† In A. D. 1756.

‡ The inhabitants of the space of territory, lying between the river Attoc and Persia, are called Afghans.

§ Ahmed Shah returned into Afghanistan, from his fourth Indian expedition, in the year 1757.

India.

India. Najeb-ud-Dowlah, the only Mahometan chief of power or ability, that was hostile to their interest, could not bring into the field an army of sufficient strength to oppose their progress. He had been compelled to take post in the vicinity of Sookertal, a fort situate on the west side of the Ganges,* where he was reduced to such extremity, that had not the approach of the Rohillas, and Shujah-ud-Dowlah, who were moving to his assistance, together with the rumour of the Duranny Ahmed Shah's march towards the Jumna, obliged the Mahrattas to retire, it is probable that Najeb-ud-Dowlah would have fallen under the superior force of their arms.

In the same year, but previously to this event, Ghaze-ud-Dein had cut off the Emperor,† and placed Shah Jehan the Second on the throne. The capital no longer contained any grand object of ambition. The power of its princes had been sunk and trampled on, its treasures had been plundered, and its gates indiscriminately thrown open to Hindoos and Mahometans, according to the varying power of the day. The Mahrattas, who in their turn gave the law at Dehli, deposed the Shah Jehan, who had been exhibited to promote the views of Ghaze-ud-Dein, and raised to the throne, Jehan Bucht, the son of Ali Gohur.‡ After some desultory actions, the Duranny Ahmed Shah, joined by

* Now in ruins.—See Rennell's Map.

† Alumguir Sani.

‡ One of the domestic titles of the present Emperor.

Najeb-

Najeb-ud-Dowlah and their Rohilla chiefs, attacked the Mahrattas, and defeated them, in a general engagement on the plains of Bandy,* in 1770; when Najeb-ud-Dowlah singularly distinguished himself, routing, it is said, with his own troops, the division of the Mahratta army commanded by Duttah Pattelle,† who fell in the field. In the battle of Panifrett,‡ the fortune of which was to decide the existence of the Mahometan Empire in India, the Afghans were powerfully assisted by Najeb-ud-Dowlah, who during the period of an important intercourse with them, evinced an inviolable fidelity and spirit.

THE overthrow of the Mahrattas and Ahmed Shah's return into his own country, contributed to give the affairs of the Empire a less distressful aspect; and the abilities of Najeb-ud-Dowlah,§ who conducted the administration of the young Prince,|| again reflected on the capital a glimmering ray of respect. A war now broke out between Najeb-ud-Dowlah and the Jatts, a powerful and war-like tribe of Hindoos, who in the general convulsion of the state, had seized on large tracts of territory, confining on the

* In the neighbourhood of Dehli, at the passage of the Jumna, called Bouraree Ghaut.

† One of the Mahratta generals, and the uncle of Mhadgee Scindia, now so well known in the annals of India.

‡ This decisive action was fought in February 1761.

§ Ghaze-ud-Dein, in 1761, left Dehli, where he could no longer preserve an influence, and where he was detested for his cruelties and treachery.

|| Tewen Rucht.

western

western bank of the Jumna, and comprehending the strong holds of Deigh, Combere, Burtpoure, and the city of Agrah. The cause of these hostilities is not explained in any document that has reached my knowledge; nor would perhaps throw any strong light on the history of Najeb-ud-Dowlah. They arose probably from the source* which produced the various contests and

* The seeds which produced the decay of the Moghul empire, and which at this day have ripened into such malignancy, took a deep root during the reign of Aurungzebe; who though one of the most sagacious princes of the house of Timur, endangered the welfare of the state, and the security of his subjects, by an injudicious impulse of domestic affection. He portioned amongst his sons, who were active and ambitious, the most valuable provinces of the empire; where acquiring an influence and strength, that cannot be held by an Asiatic subject with safety to the monarch, they expected with impatience the event that was to determine their schemes and pretensions. On the death of Aurungzebe, the sons eagerly took up arms, and after deluging the country with blood, the war was successfully terminated by Bahauder Shah, who may be said to have mounted the throne of Dehli, from a mound of fraternal and kindred slaughter.—Not being endowed with experience, nor perhaps the genius of his father, the officers who governed the provinces, relaxed during his short reign in their allegiance, shewing obedience to such orders, as might tend to promote their own views. The Mahrattas, whom Aurungzebe had nearly subdued by the active efforts of a thirty years war, descended, at his death, from their mountains, and rapidly recovered the territories from which they had been expelled. Previously to the Persian invasion, the subahdars of Oude and the Decan, having virtually erected their chiefships into independant states, commanded, without the controul of the court, large armies, and disposed of the amount of the revenues, without rendering any account to the imperial treasury. The Empire, thus enfeebled, and governed by a luxurious and indolent prince, invited Nadir Shah to conquest and plunder. The river Attoc, the natural western barrier of India, on whose bank Mahomet Shah should have stood in person, was crossed by the Persians without opposition; and this inglorious prince, unworthy of the diadem he wore of the illustrious house which had given to the world a Baber, an Akbar, and an Aurungzebe, surrendered

and disorders of the times ; when the strong arm, unrestrained by fear of punishment, bore down the weaker ; when established rights were subverted, and the private bonds of faith, with impunity, rent asunder.

SOORIDGE Mull, the chief of the Jatts, commenced the campaign by attacking a Mahometan Jaguirdar,* the adherent of Najeb-ud-Dowlah. But the event of this war, which was fatal to Sooridge Mull,† did not confer any essential advantage on Najeb-ud-Dowlah, though he gained an easy and complete victory over the enemy : for the districts of Sarunpour had been over-run by the Sicques, against whom he was obliged to march, and to forego the fruits of his success.

IN the autumn of the year 1764, Najeb-ud-Dowlah was besieged in Dehli, by a numerous army of Mahometans, Jatts, and Sicques, collected by Jewayir Sing, the son of Sooridge Mull, who had formed sanguine hopes of crushing the power of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, and revenging the death of his father. Ghaze-ud-Dein, who had brought with him a body of Patans from Furruckabad, also joined

surrendered to them, without drawing his sword, the wealth and dominions of Hindostan.—A subsequent train of diversified ruin, moving with a rapidity not paralleled in the history of nations, has now left no other vestige of the Moghul empire, than the name of king.

* Moofah Khan, the Jaguirdar of Furrucknagur, a district lying between Dehli and Agrah.

† Sooridge Mull was killed in December 1763, in an action fought on the plains of Ghaziabad, near the river Hindia, and about eighteen miles distant from Dehli.

the

the confederate forces. After experiencing the distresses of a close siege of four months, heightened by a scarcity of provisions and money, Najeb-ud-Dowlah prevailed on Mullar Row, the Mahratta officer, to detach his troops from the army of Jewayir Sing, who on the desertion of so powerful an ally, raised the siege. The relief of Dehli was hastened also by the arrival of Ahmed Shah Durranny, at Sirhend, who was approaching with the avowed purpose of affording succour to Najeb-ud-Dowlah. This chief had but a short time breathed from the embarrassments of the late combination, when he saw that his most active exertions would be called forth to defend the territory he held on the western side of the Ganges, from the ravages of the Sicques;—a people constitutionally adapted for carrying on the various species of desultory war.

NAJEB-UD-DOWLAH formed a junction in the year 1770, with the Mahratta army, which came into Hindostan under the command of Tuckejee Holcar and Mhadgee Scindia, whom, according to my Rohilla papers, he had invited to effect the expulsion of the Sicques from the Duab. Najeb-ud-Dowlah, who had in the latter period of his life fallen into an infirm state of health, was seized with a severe illness in the Mahratta camp. Leaving behind him a part of his army under the command of Zabilah Khan, his eldest son, he proceeded towards Rohilcund; but the disorder became so violent, that he could not proceed farther than Happer, a small town in the Duab, where he

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died.*

died.* The body was carried to Najebad, and interred in a tomb that had been erected by his order, in the vicinity of that town. Najeb-ud-Dowlah held in his own right, and in fief of the Empire, a tract of country extending from Panifret eastwards to Najebad; in the Duab, it was confined on the north, by Sarunpour, and on the south, by the suburbs of Dehli; and in Rohilcund, it reached from the mountains of Siringnaghur, to the district of Moradabad.†

THE revenue of this territory in its improved state, was calculated at 100 lacks of rupees; but it was reduced to seventy, it is said, by the depredations of the Sicques, within a term of three years; nor would this amount have been preserved, had he not displayed in his operation with those Marauders, a distinguished skill in the alternate exercise of arms, and political address. The death of Najeb Khan was lamented by the people whom he governed, and his memory at this day is respected and beloved throughout the upper parts of India. He supported the character of a gallant soldier; he encouraged agriculture, and protected commerce; and he was considered as the only remaining chief of the Empire, capable of opposing any barrier to the inroads of the Mahratta and Sicque nations.

* His death happened in October, 1770.

† A principal town in Rohilcund, standing on the banks of the Ramgunge. — See Rennell's map.

SUCCINCT

SUCCINCT MEMOIRS

O F

SHUJAH-UD-DOWLAH.

A VARIETY of materials, supplied by the liberality and investigation of my friends, has enabled me to write an abbreviated history of the family and life of Shujah-ud-Dowlah; a prince who supported a conspicuous character on the theatre of Hindostan, and who, from his transactions with the English nation in India, has founded an important epocha in their annals. Having selected with caution, and unreservedly commented on the documents that have come before me, I firmly trust, that no marks of passion, no design to overcharge, or suppress facts, will appear in the relation. I am desirous also of exhibiting a general outline of the actions of a prince, who stood much above

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mediocrity

mediocrity in the estimation of his subjects ; that by a knowledge of his character, and of their sentiments, some satisfactory opinions may be formed, of the disposition and moral qualities of the natives of Hindostan.

SHUJAH-UD-DOWLAH, the son of Sufdar Jung, by a daughter of Saadut Khan, was born at Dehli, in the year 1729 of the Christian æra. Though a long line of illustrious ancestors be not the strongest tenure of the dominions held by Indian princes, who are taught to consider fortune, and the power of arms, as the primary aids in acquiring and maintaining empire ; yet a distinguished descent imparts a lustre and weight to the other qualities of a fortunate leader, and he himself beholds it with ostentatious pleasure. Historical truth calls on me to do justice to the claims of the family of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, who, in Mr. Dow's History of Hindostan, is denominated " The infamous son, of a more infamous Persian pedlar."* The ancestors of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, have for a long space of time been established in Nishabur, a town of Khorosan, where they held landed possessions, and were classed amongst the principal inhabitants of the province.

DURING my journey through Persia, I had an opportunity of

* Mr. Dow uniformly endeavours to throw an odium on the family and character of the late Vizier. When informed of the opprobrious terms used by that writer, in discussing the subject of his Domestic History, Shujah-ud-Dowlah attributed the language to the resentment of Mr. Dow, for having been refused the salt-petre farm of the Allahabad districts.

conversing

conversing with some of the inhabitants of Nishabur, who bore indisputable testimony to the ancient rank of the family of Shujah-ud-Dowlah. That this fact may be more fully exemplified, though it leads to prolixity, it is necessary to mention, that Mirzah Nasseer, the father of the maternal grand-father* of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, came into Hindostan in the beginning of the reign of Bahaudar Shah,† by whom he was appointed to an office of trust at Patna, where his tomb yet remains. Mirza Nasseer had two sons, the second of whom, Mahomet Aumeen, on being apprised of the death of his father, left Persia, and about the year 1708 visited the court of Furruckfir. He was appointed by this prince, governor of the fort of Agrah; and soon rising to greater honours he ultimately became the Viceroy of Oude, by the title of Saredut Khan Burhaan-ul-Mulck. By the reduction of this province, which had long been in a state of rebellion, he acquired a conspicuous military reputation, and was promoted to the office of Darogha Khas,‡ with the titular command of 7000 horse.

ABOUT this time, Mahomet Muckeim, afterwards entitled Sufdar Jung, the nephew of Saadut Khan, came into India, and had the daughter of his uncle given to him in marriage; of which Shujah-ud-Dowlah, was, I believe, the only male issue. Sufdar

* Saadut Khan, entitled Burhaan-ul-Mulck.

† This Emperor commenced his reign in 1707, and died in 1712.

‡ Darogha Khas, an officer of nearly the same description with the Master of the King's Household in England.

Jung,

Jung, who was active, and possessed useful abilities, became the deputy of Saadut Khan in the government of Oude.

IN the middle periods of Mahomet Shah's* reign, the Mah-rattas, at the instigation, it is supposed, of the Nizam Ul Mulck,† who was then at variance with the court, entered the Emperor's dominions, and committed severe devastations; but in attempting to penetrate into Oude, they were attacked, and after a sharp conflict, completely routed by the troops of Saadut Khan, who commanded in person. This officer afterwards joined the imperial army, which had been collected for the purpose of expelling the enemy; but on a pretence of some disgust, he left the camp and retired into Oude, without having seen the Emperor. It has been supposed that Saadut Khan, in conjunction with Nizam Ul Mulck, invited Nadir Shah into India, with the assurance of a powerful interior assistance, and an easy conquest of the Empire. This supposed fact, has been subscribed to by Mr. Dow in his History of Hindostan, with positive decision in favour of its authenticity; and it is partially noticed in the History of Nadir Shah, by Mr. Fraser, who has treated his subject with candour, and generally with perspicuity. This writer asserts, that Saadut Khan was engaged in a treacherous negotiation, which the disaffected nobles of Dehli were said to have maintained with the court of Persia; but

* This Prince succeeded to the throne in 1719, and died in 1747.

† The Father of the present Nizam Ul Mulck.

here

here I must observe, though it diverts the immediate object of my research, that Frazer's assertion stands unaccompanied by any detail of events, descriptive of the benefit which Saadut Khan derived from the invasion : nor has he quoted, in support of it, any specific authority. If a probable conclusion, indeed, is to be drawn from Frazer's relation of the conduct of Saadut Khan, during the Persian war, I would with little hesitation say, that the Governor of Oude held no share in the councils or favour of Nadir Shah, For had he obtained the protection of that Prince, to which he stood entitled from the services imputed to him, it is not probable that so large a share of the disaster of the Dehli army at Karnal, would have fallen on this officer.

In a passage of Frazer's history, it is seen, I think, that Saadut Khan could not have held a confidential correspondence with the Persian, or experienced any portion of his indulgence. Frazer says, " Before I relate the treacherous correspondence * carried on between Nizam Saadut Khan, and Nadir Shah, the invitation they gave him to march towards Hindostan, which was the principal motive that encouraged him to undertake the expedition, I shall," &c. — And in the other part of the book it is mentioned, that on Nadir's approach towards the capital, Saadut Khan received orders to join the Dehli army, and that he had already crossed the Ganges, when he was directed to return to Oude. It had been

* There is no future mention made of the correspondence.

resolved

resolved in the councils of Mahomet Shah, which were distracted and wavering, that the army should take the field under the command of the Vizier : and that the Emperor, protected by the forces of Saadut Khan, should remain at Dehli. This Omrah was required to undertake the charge, but an ill state of health at that time detained him in Oude. He arrived in February 1739, in the camp of Mahomet Shah, who receding from his former determination, had joined the army. On the day of Saadut Khan's junction * with the imperial forces, his camp was attacked and plundered by a body of Persian troops, who slew many of his attendants. Saadut Khan, on receiving information of the disaster, left the King's apartments, where he had been in waiting, and hastened to the assistance of his party. Khan Dowrah, the imperial general, marched to the relief of Saadut Khan, and in a short time, most of the imperial officers of Mahomet Shah, who commanded separate bodies, came into action. Nadir Shah, seeing the contest become obstinate and serious, appeared himself at the head of his troops, who then were irresistible, and a complete victory was gained over the Dehli army, which suffered a severe loss in men and officers. Khan Dowrah was mortally wounded : his eldest son, with many Omrahs, were slain ; and Saadut Khan fell into the hands of the enemy. In the army of Nadir it is said, that 2500 soldiers, with seven principal officers, were killed, and that 5000

* The army was encamped at Karnal, about 100 miles to the westward of Dehli.

men

men were wounded. After the engagement, Nadir Shah ordered a tent to be pitched near his own quarters, for the accommodation of Saadut Khan, and two other Omrahs of Mahomet Shah. The baggage of these officers was stationed on the outside of the camp, together with their servants, none of whom were permitted to attend them, nor were they allowed to make use of their own provisions. — Little farther mention is made of Saadut Khan by Mr. Frazer after this affair, than that he was appointed to guard the city of Dehli, on the day of Nadir Shah's first entrance. This writer likewise says, that Nadir Shah, summoning Saadut Khan before him on the 9th of March 1739, reprehended him in harsh language for being the cause of impeding the collection of the imposts,* and that on the next day, Saadut Khan died, having been before weak and indisposed. Mr. Frazer concludes his relation of Saadut Khan, by observing, that some imagined he died through anger of the abusive reproach of Nadir; and others are of opinion, that jealousy provoked him to take poison.†

Mr. Frazer's relation of the conduct of Saadut Khan, the spirit of which is strictly adhered to, now awaits a dispassionate decision, which is to determine the probable truth of Saadut Khan's invitation of Nadir Shah into India. This author, who has unquestionably left us a valuable tract of Indian history, in other passages of

* A tax laid by Nadir Shah on the inhabitants of Dehli.

† It was believed at Dehli, that Saadut died of the effects of an ulcer in his leg.

his book, observes, that the Persian Prince shewed marks of indulgence and liberality to many of Mahomet Shah's Omrahs, but no example is brought forward of his munificence, or even lenity, having been extended to Saadut Khan. On the contrary, it is seen, that Saadut Khan suffered severely in the action of Karnal, and was subsequently treated with much rigour.

SUFDAR Jung, who resided at Oude at the period of Saadut Khan's death, succeeded to the Government; an appointment, according to the tradition of the family, conferred on him by Nadir Shah: yet I am induced to believe, from the liberal conduct of the Persian to Mahomet Shah, that Sufdar Jung received the promotion at the hands of his own sovereign. Sufdar Jung, after the march of the Persian army from Dehli, came to court, where he obtained the office of Meer Atush, or grand master of the ordnance.

In the year 1746, Ahmed Shah, the Duranny, invaded Hindostan, and had advanced to Sirhend, where he was successfully opposed by the Dehli army, in which Sufdar Jung had a considerable charge. Soon after the accession of Ahmed Shah * to the throne, Sufdar Jung was advanced to the Vizarut, and his son, Shujah-ud-Dowlah, to the command of the ordnance. But a strong party at court, composed of Ghaze-ud-Dein,† Najeb-ud-

* This prince commenced his reign in 1747.

† The grandson of the great Nizam-ul-Mulck.

Dowlah,

Dowlah, the Rohilla chief, and Tameid Khan, a court eunuch, prevailing against the interest of Sufdar Jung, he was compelled to leave Dehli; but not before he had cut off Janied Khan, whom he caused to be assassinated in his own house, at an entertainment given to the eunuch.

SUF DAR Jung, having collected a large force, invaded the Imperial territories, and laid siege * to the capital, which was closely invested for the space of six months. He is accused of committing many enormities and wanton acts of violence during the siege, particularly of cannonading the palace, the destruction of which could not have facilitated the capture of the fort. The court of Dehli was compelled to accede to the terms of the rebel, who required a formal grant of the provinces of Oude and Allahabad, for himself and his heirs:—Sufdar Jung died in the year 1754, during the reign of Alimguir Sani, and was succeeded in the subahdarry of Oude, by his son Shujah-ud-Dowlah,† then about twenty-five years of age. As the design of this work does not admit of any enlargement on the subject of Sufdar Jung, it will suffice to say, that his disposition was severe, often cruel; and that his rapacious avarice threw uncommon odium on his name.

To illustrate the commencement of Shujah-ud-Dowlah's public

* This event happened in 1753.

† This domestic name of this prince was Tillah-ud-Dein Hyder. His father, who was in the Oude province during the birth of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, built, in the neighbourhood of Lucknow, the fort of Tillahabad, in commemoration of the event.

life, it is necessary to describe the situation of the court of Dehli at that period. Ghaze-ud-Dein, who had in 1753 deposed and deprived of sight Ahmed Shah, raised to the throne Alumguir Sani, whose eldest son Aly-Ghohir, fearing the treacherous disposition and ill designs of the minister, fled from Dehli.* This prince, accompanied by a small body of Mahrattas, levied for a few months, a scanty contribution in the districts lying to the southward of the capital. But being soon involved in embarrassments from so slender a provision, he solicited the aid of the Rohilla, Najeb Khan, who refusing to engage in his cause, he retired into the territory of Shujah-ud-Dowlah. The prince was treated for a certain time with hospitality and respect at Oude, but could not obtain any military aid : and being at length civilly dismissed, he proceeded to Allahabad, which was then held by Mahomet Khuli-Khan, a native of Persia, and a cousin-german of Shujah-ud-Dowlah. Mahomet Khuli, readily entering into the schemes of the prince, which were directed at the reduction of the provinces of Bahar and Bengal, the joint forces crossed the Caramnassa, and were, after various successes, defeated in 1761, by the English troops, at Suan. The honourable and humane treatment which Aly-Ghohir experienced during his residence in the English camp, created a jealousy in Cassum Ali Khan, who from the recent testimony of the prince's hostility to his interests, and seeing also the English

* This event happened in 1758.

officer

officer much attached to his person, expressed a virulent dislike of the connection. The prince accused Cassum of fomenting those dissensions in his army, which ultimately produced a desperate mutiny; when he probably would have suffered much indignity, had he not been protected by the English army. This event induced Ally-Ghohir to retire into the dominions of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, who received the fugitive king * in a manner expressive of zealous attachment, and avowed himself the champion of the royal cause.

To illustrate an event in the history of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, we must advert to the annals of a former period, and notice its origin. Sufdar Jung had appointed to the command of Allahabad, his nephew Mahomet Khuli Khan, who on the accession of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, seems to have wholly withdrawn himself from the authority of the court of Oude. Aware of the popularity and military abilities of this officer, Shujah-ud-Dowlah did not prosecute any directly hostile measures against Allahabad. During his expedition into Bahar, Mahomet Khuli had placed the government of his possessions in the hands of Nudjef Khan; the chief, who at a future period became so conspicuous in the upper parts of India. Shujah-ud-Dowlah, embracing the favourable occasion of Mahomet Khuli's absence, advanced with a small army towards the limits of Allaha-

* At this period. Ali-Ghohir had nominally succeeded to the Empire, by the title of Shah Alum. His father died in 1760.

bad.

bad. He maintained an amicable intercourse with Nudjef Khan, whom he amused by solemn protestations of attachment to the welfare of Mahomet Khuli; and represented, that the Duranny invasion had induced him to come into that quarter to solicit an asylum for his family in the fort of Allahabad, as his own country possessed no place of equal safety. Nudjef Khan would not listen to the request, but waited the instructions of Mahomet Khuli, who directed, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah's family should be admitted into the fortress with a certain number of domestic guards. It is said, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah introduced into the female equipages a body of armed men, who rushed on the garrison, and took the fort without any effusion of blood. This capture, which happened about the year 1761, rendered the affairs of Mahomet Khuli desperate, and obliged him to become a dependant on the bounty of Shujah-ud-Dowlah; who, in the course of a few months, threw him, on a charge of state crimes, into prison. Mahomet Khuli, from his valour and liberality, was held in high estimation in the Oude army, which in loud murmurs, and in comparisons not favourable to their Prince, warmly lamented his misfortunes. Nudjef Khan, on the capture of Allahabad, had entered into the service of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, and exerted himself with a zeal that endangered his own safety, to procure the release of Mahomet Khuli;*

but

* Mahomet Khuli was cut off at the fort of Tillalabad: — this example disclosed an evil, which is usually seen to pervade Asiatic states. A despotic Prince cannot always impart

But this officer had become an object of such dread at the court of Oude, from the rumours incessantly circulated in his favor, that the fears of Shujah-ud-Dowlah were not allayed until the destruction of his prisoner had been compleated by assassination. Shujah-ud-Dowlah obtained from the King the appointment of Vizier; and being now possessed of a numerous army, and the imperial person, he might justly be considered the most powerful chief in Hindostan.

In the year 1763, the war broke out between the English and Cassum Ali Khan, which after a diversified train of success and disasters, terminated in Cassum's expulsion from the province of Bengal, and his retreat, in the latter end of the same year, with

impart so full a force to his system of tyranny, as to shape to the spirit of its edicts, the minds and language of his subjects. Without the compendious savage aid of the dagger, the road to conquest and empire, would not perhaps have been so widely opened to a Timur, a Nadir Shah, or, in our day, to a Hyder Ali. When Shujah-ud-Dowlah had formed the resolution of cutting off Mahomet Khuli, he had not yet consolidated the structure of his government. The officers of his army, Persians, Moghuls, or Afghans, were daring turbulent men, and had large claims of pay. They saw in Mahomet Khuli, a brave soldier, of distinguished birth, of liberal and popular manners. They had witnessed the former treachery of Shujah-ud-Dowlah to him, and suspected his future purposes. Though this Prince dreaded the formidable qualities of Mahomet Khuli, he equally dreaded a formal indulgence of his wishes: Had he summoned this officer to a trial, or publicly ordered his death, the danger of a revolution would have been incurred: for the low state of his treasury, a long arrear, and an inherent deficiency of military genius in the Prince, had strongly operated in diminishing the subordination of the army. But such was the barbarous necessity of the measure, the miserable policy of a demi-armed despot, that he was compelled to maintain the safety of his person, and the government of his country, by the secret stab of a poignard.

the

the remains of his troops, and a large treasury, into the dominions of Shujah-ud-Dowlah. The Bengal Government, which had been long duped by the evasive replies of the Vizier to the repeated remonstrance of his succouring their enemy, discovered that he had drawn his army to Benares, and was preparing to invade Bahar, in conjunction with Cassum Ali. A letter which he addressed to the government of Bengal, peremptorily avowed his intentions. In arrogant and contemptuous language he says, " that the English, " abusing the favours conferred on them by the Emperors of Hindostan, have fomented disturbances in the empire ; and that instead of limiting their exertions to trade, as became merchants, " they interfered in the imperial affairs, exalting and deposing at pleasure, the servants of the crown. He calls upon them to justify " their actions, and to withdraw forthwith, all their people from " the King's dominions ; and in the event of disobedience, threatens " them with the royal displeasure, which he denominated *The type of God's wrath.*" Though Shujah-ud-Dowlah had buoyed up Cassum Ali with the promise of reinstating him in the provinces, we cannot easily believe, that the man who has been recently seen betraying and cutting off his kinsman, who held both the claims of friendship and affinity, would without a manifest and great advantage, incur the risk of fortune and life, in the cause of a stranger. Had the arms of the Vizier prevailed in the course of the war, the general tenor of his actions supports a fair conjecture, that he would without a scruple have annexed the conquered country to his own dominions.

IN

IN the course of the year 1764, intelligence was received at Calcutta, that the forces of the Vizier and Cassum Ali, with some few troops attached to the King, had penetrated into the vicinity of Patna ; whither our troops, on the approach of the combined army, had precipitately retired. The enemy being afterwards repulsed in assaulting the European trenches, retreated towards the river Soane, where the Vizier made pacific advances to the English officer, who had been authorized to negotiate, but pointedly directed to demand, in the preliminary articles the surrender of Sombro, and the European deserters.* The purpose of the Vizier, in the desire he had shewn of obtaining a peace, was only to procure a cessation of hostility, that he might recruit his army. It has been even said, that he endeavoured to bring over to his cause Jaffier Ali Khan, whom the English, on the expulsion of Cassum, had a second time advanced to the government of the provinces. The Vizier, at a future period, did not disavow this supposed correspondence, which appears to have been conducted on the part of Meer Jaffier, by Nundocomar,† who gave the Vizier an assurance of his master's inclination to form a separate treaty. Shujah-ud-Dowlah had derived an essential advantage from the fears of Cassum Ali, now seriously alarmed by the repulse at Patna ; and having first inveigled away his European and best native troops, he stripped him of the largest

* About two hundred private Europeans had deserted to the Vizier.

† The person who suffered death at Calcutta, by a sentence of the Supreme Court for forgery.

part of his treasure, and military stores. The drift of the Vizier's negotiations becoming notoriously manifest, it was resolved that the English army should move towards his camp, and decide the contest in the field; which after a gallant action of five hours, gave a complete victory to the English.*

THE defeat at Buxar produced obstinate difficulties to the political and military career of the Vizier, who on that event was deserted by all his allies. Shah Alum, in a condition ill suited to the title he bore, sought an asylum in the English camp, and loudly accused Shujah-ud-Dowlah of having forced the royal authority into becoming an instrument of his ambition, and a sanction of his hostile designs against the English. This was the second time that the unfortunate Shah Alum had taken refuge in an English army. Here let me direct the view of the reader to the revolutions, which within no wide compass of time, have affected the empire of Hindostan: where at the close he will behold, with an awe and wonder that must humble the proudest of us to the dust, the illustrious house of Timur shaken to its foundation.

IN the reign of Aurungzebe,† it may, without any violation of truth, be said, that Hindostan, whether for its wealth, magnitude,

* The English army consisted of 857 Europeans, and 6215 native troops, of which, 101 Europeans, and 773 sepoys, were killed and wounded. The army of Shujah-ud-Dowlah was computed at 40,000 men, 2000 of whom it is said were slain in battle. The artillery taken by the English in the field, and in the pursuit of the enemy, amounted to 133 pieces of various sizes.

† This prince died in 1707, having reigned near fifty years.

OR

or military resource, was the most distinguished empire in the Asiatic world. It must also be noticed, that the English, at that period, were not known beyond the sea coasts of India, where they occupied, under various restrictions, the profession of merchants. Behold the scene presented in our day, of the feeble princes of Dehli, where a near successor of the great Aurungzebe, impelled by the destruction of his fortunes, is seen soliciting, in a country so lately under the dominion of his ancestors, maintenance and protection from an English subject.*

THE Vizier, who had now severely felt the superiority of the English arms, shewed a serious desire of peace, but still refused to submit to the terms of the preliminary article, in the manner required by the Bengal Government. He refused to deliver up Cassum Ali, and Sambro, but promised to employ some convenient instrument in destroying the one, and to expel the other from his territories. This mode of qualifying the article, not being acceded to, Colonel Munro marched with the army to Benares. The desertion of a party of Europeans, and the retreat of our troops towards Patna, on his entering the Bahar province, had given him sanguine hope of success, which were wholly dissipated by the defeat at Buxar : and from that period, he began to model his army on a plan not before practised by the princes of India. The

* This fact has been again exemplified in the person of Schamdhur Shah, the eldest son of Shah Alum ; who, by the interposition of the Bengal Government, receives a pension of three lacks of rupees out of the Oude revenue.

author * of a valuable manuscript, which has largely aided this compilation, says, that the æra of the real consequence and power of the Vizier may be dated from the battle of Buxar. Conformably to an usage not unfrequent in Hindostan, this prince had collected a larger army than the sources of his country could maintain ; and even where the funds are competent, military payments are ever distributed in the native armies with a griping hand ; though the most pernicious effects are often produced by this fallacious system. The strength of the Vizier's army, consisting of cavalry, and a cumbrous body of artillery, was composed of many nations and tribes, but chiefly of Moghuls. These men, naturally violent and licentious, ill-brooked the failure of payment, and on every demand of arrears, either caused dangerous tumults, or forced expedients that were injurious to the civil government of his country. Orders of payment were granted on the farmers, or managers of districts, on whom these foldiers lived at discretion, until the amount was discharged ; giving a loose to every species of disorder, and barely leaving a sum sufficient for supplying the other exigencies of the state. But the defeat he sustained at Buxar, relieved the Vizier from his embarrassments : for the Moghul cavalry, without making one spirited effort to sustain the battle, were the first of his troops that left the field ; and conscious it should seem of their pusillanimous conduct, they never returned to his standard.

* Colonel Polier;

THE

THE English army advanced from Benares to invest Chunar-Ghur; but after making two unsuccessful assaults it returned to Benares. Bulwunt Sing, the Hindoo Chief of the province, had accompanied the Vizier in the campaign against the English, with a party of troops, which were stationed on the north side of the Ganges, opposite to the Buxar plain. After the battle, he withdrew himself from the Vizier, and having effected an accommodation with Colonel Munro, he joined the English army: but, alarmed at the repulse of Chunar-Ghur, and the Vizier's approach, he suddenly deserted Benares, and his new connexion.

COLONEL Munro, resigning about this period* the command of the army, was succeeded by Major Fletcher, who immediately marched out of Benares, and pursued the Vizier, who had already invested the town as far as Juanpour. He formed the army into two divisions, one of which, under Major Stibbert, reduced the fort of Chunar-Ghur, and afterwards penetrated into the interior parts of the Vizier's country:—the other division he led himself into the Allahabad districts, which were subjected. The Vizier, not able to oppose the success of these parties, called in a body of Mahrattas, who entered his country on the side of Corah,† and were defeated by the English army, then commanded by General Carnac.‡ The Mahrattas were attacked a second time by this

* This occurrence happened in the beginning of the year 1765.

† This district, which is situated in the Allahabad territory, is bordered by the Jumna.

‡ In May, 1765.

officer,

officer, at Ackbarpour,* and driven from their ground ; though not before they had plundered a great part of the European baggage. They were soon obliged to cross the Jumna, which they passed at the ford of Culpee, where they made a stand ; but after a short action were wholly dispersed. The Vizier had invited the Mahrattas into Oude, without making any provision for the payment of their subsidy ; and, fearful that this failure might prompt them to commit an outrage on his person, or create tumults in his army, he never joined their party.

The affairs of the Vizier had now fallen to a low ebb ; he had lost the greater part of his country, his army was thinned by desertions, and he was without a treasury, or an ally. After the battle of Buxar,† full of alarms and despondency, he had retired into Rohilcund, where he solicited an asylum for his family, and the assistance of the Rohillas. Hafiz Rhamut received him with hospitality, and the respect due to his rank : he afforded him every domestic conveniency, but earnestly advised a peace with the English, as the certain medium of retrieving the desolated states of his fortunes. Destitute of every resource for maintaining a war, and dis-

* In May or June, 1765.

† Justice to a character, already distinguished in Hindostan for liberality and valour, calls on me to note in this place, the name of Ahmed Khan Bunglish, the Navaub of Furruckabad ; who when urged by Colonel Munro, after the action of Buxar, to assist in completing the overthrow of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, who had ever been the avowed enemy of his house, said that his honour forbid him to carry arms against the vanquished.

mayed

mayed by ill fortune, the Vizier at length resolved to throw himself unreservedly on the clemency of the English. He dispatched Monsieur Gentil, a French gentleman, to the English camp,* to obtain an actual knowledge of the disposition of his enemies. This agent delivered to the commanding officer, an address from the Vizier, couched in a tenor far different from his former letters. He observed, that the animosities which had arisen between them, must be attributed to the dispensations of Providence : that of this he had now manifest witness by the events which had been produced, and that he was determined to commit himself to the justice of the illustrious English chiefs, constant and unchangeable in their friendship. In the conclusion, written by himself, he says, " I regard not
" wealth, nor the rule of dominion : your friendship and favour are
" all I desire. I will, please God, soon be with you ; when you
" may do that for me, which you may think best." Lord Clive, who at this time had arrived in Bengal, was empowered by the Government, in conjunction with General Carnac, to negotiate with the Vizier : and having met him at Allahabad, in the month of August, 1765, a treaty of peace was finally concluded. The substance was,—That there should be a perpetual treaty of peace between the contracting parties.—That in the event of the dominions of either being invaded, a military aid should be furnished by the

* Nudjef Khan was employed also by the Vizier on this occasion to negotiate with the English ; but that officer was more seriously engaged in accomplishing his own purposes, than in procuring terms for his master.

other

other. — That the Vizier is not to receive Cassum Ali, Sombro, or any English deserters into his service. — That Corah and Allahabad be ceded to the King. — That Bulwunt Sing be continued in the zemindary of Benares, which is to be considered a fief of the Subahdary of Oude : — And that Chunar-Ghur, a fort in that province, be given up to the English. That no duties be collected on the merchandize of the Company, in any part of the country of the Vizier. That all such subjects or relations of the Vizier, who may have assisted the English during the late war, be pardoned ; — and, That this treaty remain in force with the descendants of the Vizier.

Thus was Shujah-ud-Dowlah restored to the possession of his dominions by the victorious English, after having been reduced by their arms to the verge of ruin. The terms granted to him breathe a liberal heroic spirit, and conspicuously distinguished the mind from which they sprang. The memory of the Indian hero, ill merits the stain impressed on it by Mr. Dow, who says, “ Shujah-ud-Dowlah, was still possessed of wealth, and the virtue of the conquerors, was by no means proof against temptation.” — But it is a fact supported by the purest authority, that Lord Clive obstinately rejected every offer of gratuity, made to him by the Vizier. Exclusive* of the articles of the treaty, a private agreement,

* The act of reinstating the Vizier in his dominion, not only contributed to exalt the character of the British nation, but was strictly consonant to the principles of sound policy.

ment, entered into by the contracting parties, stipulated, on the part of the Vizier, a payment of fifty lacks of rupees to the English Government, for defraying the expences of the war; as the English at this period, did not ostensibly interfere in the administration of the Bengal provincial affairs; which on the death of Meer Jaffier had devolved on his son Nuzzum-ud-Dowlah.

THE treaty entered into with Shujah-ud-Dowlah, was executed by this prince, on one part, and on the other by the subahdar of

policy. It evinces also a foresight which is grievously verified in the events of succeeding times. Lord Clive, in his letter to the Company, says, "Our restoring to Shujah-ud-Dowlah, the whole of his dominions, proceeds more from the desire of not extending the Company's territorial possessions, than the generous policy of attaching him for ever to our interests by gratitude; though this has been the apparent, and is by many thought to be the real motive. Had we ambitiously attempted to retain the conquered country, experience would soon have proved the impracticability of such a plan. The establishment of an increased army must have been added to your list, and more chiefships appointed. Acts of oppression and innumerable abuses would have been committed, which, at such a distance from the presidency, could neither have been prevented, or remedied; and must infallibly have laid the foundation of another war. Our old privileges and possessions would have been endangered by every supply we might have been tempted to afford in support of the new, and the natives must have finally triumphed in our inability to sustain the weight of our own ambition."—In India, it is to be noted, donations are presented to men of power, or those who are supposed to influence them, for personal protection, and for the security or acquisition of property. A rejected offer is the established signal of displeasure, and either indicates its insufficiency, or that some more adequate reward has been already preferred. Shujah-ud-Dowlah was at first alarmed at the conduct of Lord Clive, whose refusal of any gift was construed into a disposition inimical to his interests. But this prince beheld the soldier's magnanimity with admiration, when at the conclusion of the treaty, he received, in token of friendship, a ring of moderate value.

Bengal, in conjunction with Lord Clive: but that all future embarrassments might be obviated, a delegated power, authorizing the English India Company to manage and controul the revenues of the provinces, was obtained from the king. It was also stipulated, that in consideration of the appointment of Nuzzum-ud-Dowlah to the military and executive government of the provinces, and his grant* of the civil jurisdiction to the English, the sum of twenty-six lacks of rupees† should be annually paid to the king, out of the revenues of Bengal. The districts of Allahabad and Corah were at the same time dismembered from the Vizier's territory, and ceded to Shah Alum, that he might be enabled to maintain, without a restraint, the dignity of his station.

THOUGH he amply experienced the liberality of the English, the Vizier had suffered important injuries during the war. From the revenue of Oude, which with certain districts of Allahabad, was computed at one hundred and sixty lacks of rupees, the cession of Corah and Allahabad, had deducted thirty-six lacks; and the ravages of his own army, with the incursions of our troops, who had proceeded as far as Lucknow, caused a farther decrease of the general produce of his country.—In acknowledgement for the cession which had been made, Shah Ullum in-

* It is termed the Dewany.

† From this amount, a pension of two lacks of rupees was bestowed, at the intercession of the English, on Nudjef Khan, who was thought to have rendered them service during the latter part of the Oude war.

vested

vested the Vizier with the hereditary possession of the province of Oude.

THIS prince was now seen to apply with a vigilant assiduity to the administration of his affairs. The revenue department was committed to the charge of men of ability and credit, who in the space of a few years enabled him to discharge a large debt, and to accumulate a fund for the supply of public exigencies.

ON his arrival at Oude, after the Allahabad treaty, he called together, it is said, his principal officers, and making known to them the engagements he had made with the English, he desired their aid in performing the obligation. Through this mode of requisition, which is often practised by the princes of India in time of need, the Vizier obtained some aid; though far short of his necessities. His Begum, seeing the difficulties that surrounded him, and the distressed state of his mind, divested herself of the jewels, and other valuable ornaments she possessed, and entreated that the amount might be applied to the arrangement of his affairs. It is mentioned, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah was so warmly affected by this mark of the Begum's attachment, which wholly removed his embarrassment, that he solemnly swore, he would never, while he resided in the same place, absent himself from her apartment after a certain hour of the night; and that he would thenceforth ever esteem her his faithful friend and counsellor. Nor does it appear that he deviated from the vow he made to the Begum, who be-

came from that day the repository of his treasure, and all his secret transactions.

THE defeat at Buxar, having relieved the Vizier from the maintenance of a turbulent crowd of cavalry, he began to introduce in his army, a system of order and regular payment. He had seen that the excellency of the European troops consisted in discipline, the quality of their arms, and the skilful management of artillery. He therefore made strenuous and unceasing efforts in forming a body of infantry, with its requisite establishment of cannon, after the European manner. The undertaking was arduous, and such as few Asiatic princes could have executed. But the genius, activity, and perseverance of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, surmounted the various obstacles, which rooted prejudice and constitutional habit had raised to oppose him. Under the direction of some Frenchmen whom he had invited into his service, an arsenal was founded at Fyzeabad, where guns, musquets and shot, with other military stores, were fabricated with skill and expedition.— From this new magazine, about ten battalions of infantry, and a small train of artillery, were equipped. Though this body was formed at the expence of large sums, and much labour, such judicious arrangements had been adopted for the government of his country, that sufficient funds were created to defray the charge, and to produce a respectable treasury. The cavalry, which at the battle of Buxar amounted to 39,000, appears at this time to have been

been reduced to little more than 5,000 men. The Vizier derived an essential benefit from the English garrison, that was stationed at Allahabad, which keeping that quarter in awe, relieved him from the necessary expence of protecting a frontier country.

IN the year 1768, Shujah-ud-Dowlah saw himself in the possession of a well appointed army, a treasury competent to its charge, and a flourishing productive territory. This quick progress, in endeavouring to dissolve the subordinate connexion into which he had been forced, and to extend his power, attracted the notice of Colonel Smith, who was stationed at Allahabad.—This officer represented the conduct of Oude, as dangerous to the interest of the nation, and demanding an immediate interposition. The council, roused by this information, deputed Messrs. Cartier, Russell, and Colonel Smith, to the Vizier, to expostulate on the tendency of his military preparations; which indicated, they observed, a want of confidence in their friendship and support. The deputies held a conference with the Vizier at Benares, in the month of November, 1768; when after much acrimonious altercation, he consented, though with a deep mortification and reluctance, to limit the strength of his troops to the following number and denomination;

Cavalry,

Cavalry,	—	—	—	10,000
Ten battalions of sepoy, including officers of every rank,	—	—		10,000
The Nujeeb regiment of matchlock-men,				5,000
A corps of artillery, not to exceed	—			500
Irregulars, not to be clothed, disciplined, or armed, after the manner of the English sepoy, or Nujeeb regiment,	—	—		9,500
				35,000

THE Vizier considered this restriction as no less unjust, than it was disgraceful to him ; but, incapable of avowedly opposing the requisition of such powerful and jealous allies, he resolved to execute his plans with more address, though without any essential deviation from the object that biased all his actions : and it is a well-known fact, that he did not, in consequence of the treaty of Benares, dismiss one soldier from his service. His proceedings were conducted with caution, and he was successful in procuring, amongst the English themselves, zealous and able advocates ; but the Vizier saw that his ambition and schemes of aggrandisement, would ever be encountered by the jealousy of the English, whom he now beheld with mistrust and resentment ; and knowing the French were the common enemy of our nation, the Vizier held out many inducements to engage their assistance.

IN

IN the year 1772, a Mahratta army, commanded by the chiefs, Scindia, Halcar, and Hurry Punt, penetrating into Hindostan, laid waste the Duab, and possessed themselves of the Etajoh districts, together with all the territory of Ahmed Khan Bungish, except the town and environs of Furruckabad. An invasion so formidable had alarmed the Rohilla chiefs, who, on the approach of the Mahrattas, solicited the Vizier to procure the aid of an English brigade; for which they offered the sum of forty lacks of rupees. The Vizier, anxious for the safety of his own country, on the confines of which the enemy were already encamped, accepted, without hesitation, a proposal that would enable him to defray the expences of a body of troops, from which he himself would derive an essential benefit; and he, some time in the year 1772, applied to the English Government, for a supply of forces to defend his dominions against the threatened invasion of the Mahrattas. Conformably to this requisition, an English brigade proceeded to Benares, whence a detachment of three native battalions, joined by the forces of the Vizier, marched to the frontiers of Rohilcund; the interior parts of which the Mahrattas were then laying waste. The commencement of the periodical rains, and the near approach of the combined army, obliged them to rapidly cross the Ganges. The Mahrattas, in the following year,* again entered Rohilcund where they committed much devastation; but they retreated on

* 1773.

the

the appearance of the Vizier's army, which had been reinforced by a complete English brigade.

ON the night previously to the arrival of the combined forces in the vicinity of the Mahratta encampment, which was formed on the west side of the Ganges, a large body of their cavalry crossed the river, and, dispersing the Rohilla troops, they carried off Ahmed Khan, one of the principal officers. The brigade reached the place of this action about break of day, when they observed the Mahrattas passing the river,* then fordable, with precipitation; and a distant cannonade ensued, in which the enemy lost a few men and horses: but they soon retired from that quarter, nor have they since appeared in arms on the east side of the Ganges.

THE Vizier, on the retreat of the enemy, demanded the sum of forty lacks of rupees from Hafiz Rhamut Khan, who being at this time the superiour officer of the Rohilla forces, and the conductor of their political measures, was urged to fulfil the engagement. Hafiz represented, that the Rohillas had not received the stipulated aid, which, if furnished in the preceding year, might have prevented the injuries done by the enemy; and that the present campaign had been maintained by the Rohilla troops: yet he said, that though the other chiefs should withhold their quota of the claimed amount, he would discharge his proportion to the extent of his ability.

* At Ramgaut, a ford of the Ganges in Rohilcund.—Vide Rennell's map.

THE

THE ambitious disposition of the Vizier, and the disregard he had hitherto shewn to the dictates of justice, or honour, afford no slender authority for supposing that he secretly rejoiced at the refusal of the Rohillas to execute the whole tenor of their agreement. In promoting and extending his schemes of conquest and grandeur, the Vizier must have ever been exposed to the counteracting power of the Rohillas, who were all soldiers, and so far from respecting his military capacity, they treated it with contempt and derision. The conquest of Rohilcund must have therefore naturally composed an essential part of the Vizier's general plan of aggrandizement.

AFTER his return from the Mahratta expedition, he desired a conference with the Governor of Bengal, for the purpose of adjusting certain political measures. Mr. Hastings, associated with some other members of the Government, was deputed to treat with the Vizier at Benares; and the principal object of the meeting was ascribed to the motive of fixing the western possessions of the English, on a firmer and more permanent basis, by some final arrangement of the territories that had been assigned to the king.

SINCE the period of the treaty of 1765, Shah Alum had remained at Allahabad, where he had enjoyed a splendid and a quiet retreat; but his wishes seeming to be centered in enjoying the residence of his capital, he proceeded thither in 1771: — sacrificing, at once, the substantial benefits which had been conferred on him

by the bounty of the English. The King was also excited to this measure by his servants, who saw the influence of a foreign power depriving them of the common advantages of their station, and of that sway which his disposition naturally invited. The repeated solicitation of the king for troops, to establish his power at Dehli, were not acceded to in a manner that promised any success: he procured two native battalions that had been maintained by him at Allahabad, but without the complement of European officers; and this party, with about 20,000 irregular troops, commanded by Najeb Khan, arrived in the latter end of the year 1771, at Dehli.*

THE principal events of the life of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, being slenderly connected with the history of Shah Alum, an occasional reference to it is only necessary; and it may here be observed, that the measures of an Indian court, too frequently operating through the many channels of deceit, or by the more daring acts of treachery, would offer little instruction to the European reader, unless they lead to decided revolutions, or affect the general system of government.

THE Vizier did not depend upon the court of Dehli, for the success of his schemes, or the advancement of his power. He maintained however an influence there, by the agency of Ellich

* It is said, that the King's journey was hastened by the intelligence of Zabith Khan's seizure of Dehli, where he committed many outrages; even, according to popular report, in the King's haram.

Khan,

Khan, one of his favourite servants, who gratifying the King by opportune donations, procured the formal investiture of such territories, as the Vizier had either previously seized, or meditated the conquest of. But we are not to suppose that the possession of such instruments, which had a constant circulation, and flowed from too weak a source to act with efficacy, would essentially promote the designs of this prince.

THAT some parts of the treaty now entered into, between the English Government and the Vizier, may be clearly understood, it is necessary to notice, that in a short time after the departure of Shah Alum from the territories which had been assigned to him, the right was judged to revert to the English Government. On the King's junction with a body of Mahrattas, then stationed in the vicinity of Agra, he was compelled to make a formal cession to them of the province of Corah, and the districts of Currah. This surrender, to a power deemed hostile to the welfare of Bengal, afforded a plea, equally founded on the rights of conquest and good policy, to assume the relinquished territory: and the Vizier, who had with regret made the sacrifice, expressing, after the King's departure, an earnest desire of recovering the dismembered country, his request, with certain qualifications, was granted.*

X 2

IN

* The treaty of 1773, contains little important matter, nor would I fatigue the reader with its perusal, did I not apprehend, that some serious reflections will occur, in comparing it with the events of the succeeding year. It is specified, " That whereas,
" in

IN the conference at Benares, it was also stipulated, that the Vizier should confirm Cheyt Sing, the son and successor of Bulwunt Sing, in the possession of Benares, and its dependencies.

The

“ in the treaty concluded at Allahabad, on the 16th of August 1765, between the
 “ Vizier and the Company, it is expressed that the districts of Corah and Allahabad
 “ were given to His Majesty for his expences; and whereas His Majesty abandoned
 “ the possession of the aforesaid districts, and even has given a sunnud for Corah and
 “ Currah to the Mahrattas, to the great prejudice of both the Vizier and English
 “ Company, and contrary to the meaning of the said treaty; he hath thereby forfeited
 “ his right to the said districts, which have reverted to the Company, from whence he
 “ received them: it is therefore agreed, that the aforesaid districts shall be put into
 “ the possession of the Vizier, on the following conditions, and that, in the same
 “ manner as the province of Oude, and the other dominions of the Vizier are pos-
 “ sessed by him: so shall he possess Corah, and Currah, and Allahabad, for ever.—He
 “ shall by no means, or under any pretence, be liable to any obstructions in the afore-
 “ said countries from the Company, and the English chiefs, and exclusive of the money
 “ now stipulated, no mention or request shall by any means be made to him for any
 “ thing else due on this account. This agreement shall be observed by the English
 “ chiefs, gentlemen of the council, and the Company, nor shall it be broken or devia-
 “ ated from.

“ CONDITIONS :

“ He shall pay to the Company fifty lacks of Sicca Rupees,	
“ according to the currency of the province of Oude, viz. - - -	50,00,000
“ In ready money. - - - - -	20,00,000
“ In two years after the date hereof—viz. the first year - - -	15,00,000
“ The second year. - - - - -	15,00,000
Sa. Rs.	50,00,000

“ To prevent any dispute arising, concerning the payment which shall be made by
 the Vizier for the Company's troops that may march to his assistance, it is agreed,
 “ that

The Vizier acquiesced in this measure with reluctance, and marks of extreme disgust. Not that he wished to deprive this chief of his possessions, but he was averse to a foreign interference in behalf of a person whom he considered his immediate vassal, and who, by obtaining so strong a support, would naturally deviate from that state of subordination in which such landholders are placed under an effective Mahometan government. Shujah-ud-Dowlah, though accomplished in his manners, and endowed with an address that distinguished him among the politest of his countrymen, could not suppress the indignation he felt at the English Governor's desire, to have Cheyt Sing seated in his presence. But the Vizier was then preparing a suit * of such an importance to

" that the expences of a brigade shall be computed at two lacks and ten thousand
 " (2,10,000) Sicca rupees per month, according to the currency of the province of Oude.
 " —By a brigade, is meant as follows—

" Two battalions of Europeans,
 " Six battalions of Sepoys, and
 " One company of artillery.

" The expence of the said troops shall be defrayed by the Vizier, from the time
 " they shall have passed the border of the province; and exclusive of the above mentioned sum, no more on any account shall be demanded from him. Should the Company and the English chiefs have occasion to send for the troops of the Vizier, the Company, and the English chiefs, shall also pay their expence in the like manner.—
 " Signed, sealed, and solemnly sworn to, by the contracting parties, September the
 " 7th, 1773."

* A supply of troops for the conquest of Rohilcund,

his

his schemes, that had his resentments been keener, they would have been sacrificed to its accomplishment.

THAT he might the more effectually prevent English merchants or their agents from residing or negotiating in his country, the Vizier obtained permission at this time to impose large duties on the importation of Bengal, and European merchandize. He had witnessed the rapacious monopoly which the servants of the Company had exercised in Bengal, and knew that many of the calamities which had befallen that country, might be justly ascribed to the European assumption of its commerce, which had been conducted on terms so partial to themselves, that almost every other trader was obliged to purchase an European name to cover his property. It is said, that when Shujah-ud-Dowlah has been solicited to receive an English merchant into his country, he has offered him an immediate sum of money, rather than risk the admission of a system that appeared wholly destructive of the true principles of trade.

ON the conclusion of the Benares treaty, the Vizier carried his arms against the Mahrattah garrisons in the Duab, which he severally expelled; and extended his conquests as far to the westward as the Fort of Jaunpy.* The main body of the Mahrattah army having moved into the Decan, without leaving a sufficient force to

* Jaunpy stands on the western extremity of the Kalpy territory. See Rennell's map.

maintain

maintain their Duab possessions, they fell to the Vizier without resistance. A large division of the country which he acquired in this campaign, had pertained to Ahmed Khan Bungulh, the late chief of Furruckabad, who was succeeded by his adopted son, Muzzuffer Jung; a youth, whom the Mahrattas soon stripped of his most valuable districts. The Vizier, to induce the neutrality of the Patans of Furruckabad, during his Duab expedition, promised in the event of the Mahrattah expulsion, to restore to Muzzuffer Jung all the territory that had been possessed by Ahmed Khan. That the conduct of an Indian prince, in pursuit of a favourite object, or in the gratification of his ambition, may be specifically viewed, I will insert the Vizier's treaty with Muzzuffer Jung, in which is seen a solemn protestation made to God, the most endearing terms of friendship and affection pledged to man, boldly used as the instruments of treachery and dishonour. The ceremony of an oath is esteemed amongst the present race of Mahometans, a shallow trite artifice, and is only adopted by those, who, from a want of stronger resource, are driven to the necessity of adopting secondary aids.

THE treaty sets forth, " That in consequence of the friendship, that has for a long time subsisted between Muzzuffer Jung, and my ancestors, and me, I have adopted him for my child. By the grace of God, I will do whatever may be for his good or advantage. I will consider his business, his friends, and his enemies, as mine; and until our last breath, we engage for ourselves,

“ selves, and for our descendants and successors, that we will remain united.—I swear, by the Almighty God, by his Prophet, and the Holy Koran, never to vary or depart from this treaty, upon condition that my beloved son Muzzuffer Jung do adhere to it also on his part. In witness whereof, these lines are written in the style of a treaty. By the grace of God, whenever the Mahrattas are conquered, and driven out of the country, and mine enemies expelled, I will deliver up to my dearly beloved son, Muzzuffer Jung, the territories he formerly possessed, and which he has lost in the war, to the Mahrattas. Dated according to the Christian æra, January, 1774.”

SHUJAH-UD-DOWLAH did expel the Mahrattas from the Bungush territory; but he did not fulfil the tenor of his treaty with Muzzuffer Jung, to whom, on the success of the Mahratta campaign, he gave a small sum of money, but no part of the country which had been so solemnly promised.

THE grand object of the Vizier's ambition had ripened into maturity, and was now publicly avowed: — he applied to the English Government for a body of troops, to assist in the conquest of Rohilcund, the chiefs of which, he represented, had refused to perform their engagements with him, and had ever been the inveterate enemies of his house. The Government appear to have been deeply embarrassed by the Vizier's requisition: they saw the danger of carrying their arms against a remote and warlike people, and they felt a difficulty in framing the cause of a war against a nation from

from whom they had received no injury. After an indecisive deliberation of some days, they consented to commit the unreserved management of the Oude negotiation to the Governor.—He also expressed an aversion to extend the military operations of the English to so distant a quarter, and proposed, that a demand of such magnitude should be made for the aid required, that the Vizier would necessarily be induced to withdraw the application. Conformably to this counsel, an English brigade was tendered to the Vizier, for the purpose of promoting the conquest of Rohilcund; on the condition of four lacks of rupees being paid to the Company on the completion of the service, and the monthly subsidy of two lacks and ten thousand rupees, during the residence of the troops in his dominions. The conduct of Government does not authorize an inference that the Vizier would ultimately refuse his assent to these terms; for an order was dispatched to the factory at Patna, directing that the motions of a brigade stationed in that quarter, should, without further communication with the Presidency, be directed by the future instructions of the Vizier, who was at the same time advised of the measure that had been adopted.—The Vizier, thus powerfully aided in the prosecution of his favorite scheme, conducted his operations with celerity. The Governor had not informed the Council of the Vizier's designs on Rohilcund until the latter end of November,* yet the brigade

* 1773.

VOL. I.

Y

marched

marched in the following January, and in the short space of about three months,* the Rohillas were completely defeated in a pitched battle that was fought in the centre of their country. Near five thousand of them were killed and wounded; but the loss became irretrievable by the death of their chief, who was slain in the action. Hafiz Rhamut, though he bled in an honourable cause, merited a milder fate. He had never been the enemy of the English, and he had protected Shujah-ud-Dowlah at the lowest ebb † of his fortunes.

AFTER the engagement, Fyze-ullah Khan retreated with a large party of the routed army to Lall Dong, ‡ where he took post on the side of a steep hill. The Vizier, accompanied by the English brigade, invested the intrenchments of the Rohillas, who being reduced to various distress, from a confined unhealthy situation, and serving under a leader of no military talents, they proposed earnest terms of accommodation to the English commanding officer; who urged, and prevailed on the Vizier, after a long struggle, to liberate Fyze-ullah, and cede to him a certain territory in Rohilcund. This chief, before the war, held the Jaguir of Rampour, rated at five lacks of rupees; but this con-

* The battle was fought on the 23d of April, 1774, near the village of Teshunah.

— For the situation, Vide Rennell's map.

† Shujah-ud-Dowlah, with his family, took refuge in Rohilcund after the battle of Buxar.

‡ The northern boundary of Rohileund.

vention *

vention * invested him with a revenue of fifteen lacks, and the most fertile quarter of Rohilcund.

FYZE-ULLAH KHAN, having concluded the negotiation, which was wholly effected by the English officer, with whom a counterpart of the treaty was executed that the sanction of the Company might be obtained, he paid, according to a previous stipulation, a gratuity of fifteen lacks of rupees to the Vizier. The change of

* “Whereas friendship is established between me and Fyze-ullah Khan.—I give
 “unto him Rampour, and some other districts dependent thereon, altogether amount-
 “ing to 14 lacks and 75,600 rupees yearly; and I direct that the said Fyze-ullah
 “Khan do on no account take into his pay above 5000 soldiers. I engage, at all times
 “and on all occasions, to preserve the honor of the said Fyze-ullah Khan, and to act
 “for his good and advantage, on the condition, that he shall look to no other power
 “but mine for support; that he engages to correspond with no other state than the
 “English. Our enemies and friends are mutual. Fyze-ullah Khan shall assist me
 “with 2 or 3000 troops according to his ability. If I go in person on any expedition,
 “or to any part of my dominions, Fyze-ullah Khan shall attend me; and as the num-
 “ber of 5000 troops which Fyze-ullah Khan is allowed at all times to keep up, is
 “small, and he may be unable to bring them all into the field with him, in such case,
 “I will place from 2 to 4000 men under his command, that he may join me with be-
 “coming dignity: the pay of these additional troops to be found by me. It is upon
 “the abovementioned considerations that I consent to settle upon Fyze-ullah Khan
 “the said country, and engage to support his interests. If he continue firm in the
 “performance of this treaty, by the grace of God, I never will be backward in con-
 “sulting his advantage and good.—He is to cause all the Rohillas to cross the river
 “Ganges. Sworn by the Holy Koran, calling God and his Prophets to witness to
 “the performance of these articles.”

*Extracted from the Bengal
 Records of 1774.*

*Col. Champion's
 Seal.*

*Rujeb 1188 Hegira.
 October, 1774, A. D.*

the system of the Bengal Government which began to operate at this time, and was hostile to the councils of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, might also have impelled him to a speedy conclusion of the Rohilla treaty.

IN the year 1783, Fyze ullah was liberated from all military vassalage to the Vizier, on the payment of a sum of money to the English resident at Lucknow, which was applied to the service of the Bengal Government.

BUT had Shujah-ud-Dowlah been permitted to pursue the system of policy which had been observed to the other Rohilla chiefs, Fyze-ullah would at this day have languished in poverty and dependance. Happily for this chief and the residue of his nation who have now fertilized and made populous a large tract of country, a powerful advocate came forth in their behalf, who though the leader of a subsidiary body, assumed in an honourable cause, the efficient power of protection. The Vizier, in an acrimonious complaint preferred against this officer, observes, " that
" as it had been his absolute determination to extirpate the Ro-
" hillas, and for that purpose requested the assistance of the Eng-
" lish troops, was it not highly improper in the commanding
" officer, to enter into such a correspondence without his per-
" mission ?" The Vizier had in truth resolved to destroy the Rohillas, or expel them ; and this resolution shaped the whole form of his conduct during the campaign in Rohilcund. He entertained

tained so rooted a dread of this people from their valour and haughty spirit, or perhaps a consciousness of the injuries he had already committed, that he would not permit those that were subjected to remain in any part of his dominions.

AT the close of this general description of the progress of the English arms in Rohilcund, [for the aids afforded by the Vizier can scarcely claim a notice,] I will insert some observations on the tendency and effects of our engagements with the Vizier in the reduction of that territory. It is manifestly seen, that the Government of Bengal were either unacquainted with the virtue and extent of their compact with the Vizier, or that they avowedly assisted him in stripping one of their allies of his hereditary possession. It was roundly agreed to invest the Vizier with the dominion of Rohilcund, the limits of which were carried to the mountains on the north, and to the river Ganges on the west. Yet a large tract of the northern division of Rohilcund, was held by Zabita Khan,* with whom the English were at this time in alliance, and bound by a treaty "to confirm to him his ancient dominions, to consider him as a dependant on their favor, and that their friends and enemies should be mutual."

THE Vizier, previously to the invasion of Rohilcund, had brought over to his interests Zabita Khan; who though of the Rohilla sect, and of near affinity to many of the chiefs, united

* The son of Najeb-ud-Dowlah.

with

with the Vizier against the cause of his nation. But he was severely punished for his treachery, and the dishonorable connection he had formed; for the Vizier, after the completion of the conquest, asserting that Zabitah Khan had during the war maintained a correspondence with the enemy, seized on all his territory east of the Ganges; and it remains at this day annexed to the Government of Oude.

THE conduct of the Vizier also to the family of Mohubullah Khan,* evinces that every sentiment of honour and faith fell before the impulse of his ambition. This chief, who held the town and districts of Biffouly, either from having been involved in a domestic contest with those Rohilla states who appeared in arms against the Vizier, or from other motives, did not engage in the war. Before the army moved into Rohilcund, he sued the Vizier for protection in behalf of his family and property, which the prince, in strong and unequivocal terms, pledged to preserve in safety and honour. On this faith, Mohubullah Khan remained during the campaign at Biffouly; but on the Vizier's arrival at that place, he was, with his family, thrown into a rigorous confinement, pillaged of every article of value, and his women were treated with a disgraceful severity. In an address of Mohubullah to the English commanding officer, in which were also inclosed the original letters of the Vizier, granting an unre-

* The son of Dhoondy Khan, who has been already noticed in the Rohilla sketches.

served

served protection, he writes, " The Vizier has deprived us of our
 " country, of our riches, and even of our honour; and, not con-
 " tented with that, he is going to send us prisoners to Fyzeabad.
 " We desire no country, no riches, no house; but at Bissouly are
 " the tombs of our family—near them, and under some shade,
 " we beg permission to pass, as mendicants, the remainder of our
 " days. Relying on the Vizier's promises, we remained in this
 " country; otherwise, we should, like the other chiefs, have fled,
 " and preserved our character and honour: these, with our effects,
 " he has taken away; and how he has dishonoured us, is known
 " to all." The Vizier is said to have exercised an indecent rigour
 towards the female prisoners of the Rohillas who fell into his
 hands; and he is accused also of having violated the chastity of
 some women of the family of Hafiz Rhamut.* The last allega-
 tion is not supported by any substantial authority; nor indeed, are
 such acts of outrage common amongst the most intemperate Ma-
 hometans; who, however prone to other excesses, are not often
 seen tearing asunder the veil of the haram.

THE oppressions and rapacity of the Vizier in the course of
 the conquest, affixed a deep stain on the English character. The
 vanquished naturally supposed, that the hand which had led him
 to victory, could have been efficiently exerted in restraining his

* Shujah-ud-Dowlah was impressed with so lively a sense of indignation, at the
 disgrace, as well as the injustice of this charge, that he burst into tears, when he was
 informed that it had been believed by the English commanding officer.

violence.

violence. The cause specifically held out by the Vizier for making war on the Rohillas, was their with-holding payment of the sum which they had offered for the service of an English brigade. It has been shewn that the brigade did not arrive in Rohilcund at a due season : for the Mahrattas had, in two successive years, committed wide devastations in that country, and were leaving it when the English troops appeared. The arguments used by the Vizier, in support of the invasion, were weakly maintained, on either a principle of equity or reason : and his purposes might have been effected without the exhibition of so wretched a cloak. In countries where the paths of rectitude and honour are more precisely described and adhered to than in Hindostan, the political usage of princes does not widely deviate from the conduct pursued by Shujah-ud-Dowlah in insuring success to his schemes of ambition. But what can be urged in vindication of the English, who, to gratify a rapacious ally, and without even acquiring an adequate benefit to the state, effected the destruction of a nation, against whom they could not fabricate a specious cause of complaint ?

THE subject of the Rohilla war hath already been so widely dilated by those who promoted, and those who have condemned, the measure, that I am fearful of giving disgust by any further enlargement ; nor does the discussion properly belong to the purpose of this essay : yet I cannot refrain from pointing at the ill policy of the English, in annexing Rohilcund to the dominion of the Vizier. The injustice of the act, with the severe effects that followed,

followed, are now admitted by most classes of men ; and has imprinted a deep stain on the British name in India. The Government of Bengal, in assigning a reason for investing the Vizier with the possession of Rohilcund, asserted, that the more powerful this prince became, the greater advantage would accrue to them from his alliance. The disposition of Shujah-ud-Dowlah must have been ill known to the English, or they would not have urged so frail an argument. Jealous of authority, and insatiably ambitious, he had already felt a keen resentment at the encroachments of Bengal on his prerogative, and national power, the preservation of which had long directed the spirit of his councils, and the actions of his government. The Rohilla nation formed a weighty counterpoise to the real strength and restless temper of the Vizier, who finding himself checked by a people naturally interested in keeping a vigilant watch over his actions, lest they should suffer by too great an increase of his power, must have been necessitated to depend on the English, to repel the encroachment or attacks of the Rohillas, and the other northern states. Our possessions in India, virtually acquired by the superiority of arms, and the eminent abilities of British officers, can only be preserved, after maintaining that superiority, by a steady adherence to the principles of justice and public faith,—virtues which did not conspicuously distinguish the last negotiation with the Vizier : nor were the dictates of common policy consulted, unless the axiom becomes manifest, which

even the most visionary politician would startle at, that nations may be linked together by the bonds of gratitude and friendship.

SHUJAH-UD-DOWLAH was yet employed in arranging the affairs of the conquered province, when a disorder which had for some time afflicted him, broke out with such violence, that he was obliged to retire to Fyzeabad, where he died in the month of January 1775, at the age of 46 years. His death was occasioned by a venereal tumour, that had been unskilfully treated by a French surgeon, who administered to him so large a quantity of mercury, that his strength, then nearly exhausted, was overpowered by the force of the medicine. The violence of the complaint had been removed by a professional gentleman of the brigade, who served in the Rohilla expedition; but being called into the provinces, the cure was not completed. The disputes of the Vizier and the English commanding officer, had arisen to such a pitch of inveteracy, that though the life of the Vizier was the pledge, and ultimately the sacrifice, he would not solicit the attendance of the field surgeon.

SHUJAH-UD-DOWLAH died at a period when his thirst of dominion had been largely indulged, and his power had arisen perhaps to its meridian height. The new members of the Bengal Government who arrived in the preceding year,* were inimical to

* 1774.

his

his public interests, and seemed even to bear an enmity to his person. The projects with which his mind teemed would soon have matured, and produced the crisis of his fortune; when he would either have arisen into powerful independence, or sunk into a station less respectable than that now occupied by his successor. His views were disclosed with so little reserve, and he personally gave such unequivocal testimony of his future designs, that his political character was arraigned by all men of discernment. He frequently told his courtiers, that after the conquest of Rohilcund, he would penetrate into the territory of the Mahrattas, and take an exemplary vengeance for the ravages they had committed in Hindostan. He evinced also an anxious desire to attain the direction of affairs at Dehli, and controul the remains of military power yet preserved to the house of Timur. But in this prospect he was thwarted by Nudjef Khan, who had the office of captain-general, and who had acquired, by his successes in the field, an extensive tract of country wholly independant of the imperial authority.

THE English had been taught to believe, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah, from a principle of self-interest, was attached to their nation; that aware of the insufficiency of his own ability, either to encrease his dominion, or resist the attacks of an enemy, he would ultimately depend on them for protection. However just their opinions might have been of the real strength and resource of this prince, it would appear that he himself held them, (especially when augmented by the conquest of Rohilcund, and other ex-

pected aids), adequate to the accomplishment of purposes, which bore no relation to an English policy. His pride and ambition, which were excessive, had been mortified by many acts of the Bengal Government; and the restrictions imposed by the Allahabad deputation, he deemed violently oppressive, and an infringement of the treaty that had been made by Lord Clive. But concealing his resentment with an admirable address, he diligently searched for expedients to dissolve a connection which placed him in so subordinate a condition. Shujah-ud-Dowlah had felt, and resolved to adopt, the European discipline. Exclusive of the French who were employed in forming his troops, he had solicited a supply of English officers to accomplish his purpose. But subsequently to the application, the Government of Calcutta had been new modeled, and seeing it hostile to his interests, he refused the service of any person who held a commission in the English army. I have obtained an information, supported by documents of substantial authority, but which I am not empowered to bring forward, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah, in the last moments of his life, was actively employed in forming schemes of independence, and even pursuing measures to extirpate the English power in India. The French officers in the service of this prince, improving on his ill humour to the English Government, represented to him that an alliance with France might be made the effectual instrument of emancipating his country from controul, and enable him to prosecute with success his schemes of conquest. The Vizier eagerly hearkened to this

this language, and agreed to open the negotiation ; but the keenness with which he commenced it, prevented his seeing the difficulties which would have obstructed its purpose. It was stipulated by the agents at Oude, that a body of French troops should land on the coast of Cambay, and marching across the upper part of the peninsula, enter the western frontier of Oude. Had the Vizier made the experiment, he would have witnessed the impracticability of the project, and the visionary schemes of these French adventurers. But a ministry of France, it is to be presumed, would have altogether rejected the measure, and have foreseen that the attempt of conveying an European force over so large a tract of country, inhabited by powerful military tribes, who entertain a common jealousy of Europeans, must have been frustrated by the surrounding impediments. The fact which is now related, stands accompanied with such a variety of corroborating proofs, that I am induced firmly to believe its authenticity. Shujah-ud-Dowlah who felt the force of the English power both in its open and concealed directions, acted consistently with the station he occupied, in endeavouring to remove a pressure so galling and disgraceful ; and had he lived until a later period, when the English nation in India was encountered by a host of assailants, and sinking under an accumulated load of intestine calamities, we might have been severely punished for having too powerfully armed the hands of this prince. His memory, I trust, will not be injured, if I place Shujah-ud-Dowlah at the crisis adverted to, amongst the foremost of
the

the enemies of the English; when, to the extent of his abilities, he would probably have been seen making strong exertions to wipe off his former disgrace, and gratify a private resentment.

HAVING marked the more conspicuous outline of the transactions of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, I will close it with some desultory observations on his character. In treating of the personal qualities of this Prince, it must be noticed, that they pertain to a native of Hindostan, whose mind, fettered by religious prejudices and the effects of a narrowed education, is rarely incited to the search of knowledge. The same actions which are countenanced, and even applauded by a Mahometan, would in the European world be often viewed with disgust, or fall under a severe reprehension of the Law. Under this preliminary sanction, it may with justice be said, that the Prince who has been the subject of this treatise, possessed a penetrating understanding, and an active mind. His disposition, when no grand object interposed, had a general tendency to promote the welfare of his subjects: and he was always averse to acts of barren cruelty.

IN the year 1765, Shujah-ud-Dowlah's revenue did not amount to more than one hundred and twenty thousand pounds, and his army had been so much reduced by the effects of the defeat at Buxar, that it was incapable of defending his territory; yet at the expiration of ten years, the period of his death, he held a dominion which produced a revenue of three hundred and sixty thousand pounds; and he maintained in his service, one hundred thousand fighting

fighting men. When it is admitted, that in the acquisition of dominion, in maintaining an important station amongst the states of India, and in the salutary government of his country, this Prince displayed an enlarged genius, it must also be allowed, that he derived a real strength, and a large portion of political consequence, from the intimate connection he had formed with the government of Bengal; over which, he seemed, at one period, to have exercised a prevailing influence. Had Shujah ud-Dowlah dissolved his English alliance, the security of his country, and the execution of his schemes, would have chiefly depended on the force of his army, and the ability of his officers; for he himself was not endowed with the genius of a soldier. He wanted that valour, or courage, which is ever shewn in the event of common danger, and at every season which requires its exertion: but when personal strength, or skill, was to decide the combat, Shujah-ud-Dowlah had few equals. He rode, without fear, the most unruly horses; he would attack with the sword, match-lock, or the bow, in the use of which weapons he was wonderfully expert, the most furious animal of the field. This species of courage he seems to have acquired from his skill in the use of arms, and in the strength and activity of his body. In situations of indiscriminate danger; as in the day of battle, he is said to have been deficient in the ordinary exertions of fortitude. Though Shujah-ud-Dowlah was the ostensible conductor of the Rohilla war, he evinced throughout the campaign a marked pusillanimity; and in the engagement with

with Hafiz Rhamut, who like a brave soldier had occupied the foremost rank of the battle, Shujah-ud-Dowlah, sheltering himself in the rear, is accused of betraying evident signs of fear, which were not wholly effaced, until he saw the severed head of the Rohilla chief.

LIKE the men of rank in Asia, he was courteous and affable, had an insinuating address, and accomplished manners. These qualifications, united with a large well-formed person, and a handsome countenance, gave him powerful advantages, as well in his intercourse with foreign agents, as in the administration of his own government. With a soothing flow of language he could calm the most outrageous claimants, who though aware of the futility of the language, seldom left his presence but under the impression of a momentary pleasure. He had acquired an extensive knowledge in the practice of every species of deceit, and he could perform with facility every character that was necessary to conduct the various purposes of delusion or treachery. Though capable of executing the subtlest scheme of intrigue, he was subject to occasional emotions of anger, which have frequently clouded his countenance at seasons when they were hostile to his views. In his family, he performed the duties of a mild, indulgent parent, and a kind master. When an object of policy called for pecuniary distribution, he could lavish with a liberal hand; but generosity did not form a fixed part of his disposition: He was equally rapacious in acquiring, as sordid in preserving wealth. Shujah-ud-Dowlah's ex-

cesses

cesses in venery, which knew no controul, led him to commit actions derogatory from his station, as well as pernicious to his health; and even when his disorder had produced an irrecoverable stage of disease, he continued to indulge in a promiscuous use of women. His haram was filled with wives and concubines, to the number, it is said, of eight hundred, from whom were born to him fifty children.—Mirzah Arnany, afterwards entitled Afoff-ud-Dowlah, was the eldest legitimate son, and succeeded to the entire dominion of Oude without tumult or opposition.

CONTINUATION OF THE LETTERS.

LETTER IX.

Bellaspour, 22d February, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

BEFORE I leave our Indian world, let me, through you, make an acknowledgment for the many cordial marks of friendship, and the kind assistance, I have received, throughout every station in the provinces. The gentlemen of Bengal have been long noted for their hospitable conduct to strangers ; and in mine own instance, I can testify that they amply merit the commendation. The reward due to a disposition so happily framed, they enjoy to a large extent ; they experience those heartfelt pleasures which arise from the exercise of humane and liberal offices, and which ever convey an abundant recompence for the inconveniencies sustained in their gratification.—Having discharged,

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to the best of my ability, this indispensable duty, I proceed to give you an account of my journey hither.

ON the 8th of February, I left Rampour, and arrived at Moradabad—ten coffes. This town, standing on the banks of the river Ramgunga, is situated in the Vizier's country, which is separated from the districts of Fyze-ullah, a few miles to the north-west of it, by the river Ramgunga. Moradabad was once a place of distinction; but like many other places which once came under that description in Hindostan, is at this day greatly decayed. Having frequently seen rupees of the coinage of Moradabad, and those of a very general currency, I apprehend that an extensive mint has been established at this place. A hot bath is now amongst the few remains of its grandeur, in which, with great ceremony, I performed the Mahometan ablutions; being received amongst my new brethren, as a Moghul officer, employed in the Vizier's service.

EARLY on the next morning, I left Moradabad, and arrived, under an intensely hot sun, at the village of Aumruah—twelve coffes. On the day of my departure from Rampour, I had a complete view of the lofty range of northern mountains, whose summits are covered with perpetual snows: they extend nearly in a parallel from east to west, and form, I should imagine, the northern barrier between Hindostan and Thibet. To know the opinion of the people concerning this extraordinary appearance, I enquired of a fellow-traveller, the cause of so conspicuous a whiteness. He said,

said, that it proceeded from a particular sort of clay, with which the hills in that quarter were covered. I soon perceived that the task of explaining the real cause would have been equally arduous with an attempt of making him acquainted with the properties of the magnetic needle; so, expressing my surprise at the singular quality of the earth, I left him, flattered, no doubt, with the importance of his communication. The most striking object to be seen at Aumruah, is the body of a notorious robber, which, suspended by the heels from a tree, affords an useful spectacle of terror. Travelling is by no means attended with danger in this part of India, as may be proved by my example: for in no part of the roads from Benares to this place, though chiefly alone, did I meet with impediment or ill usage; and I should hold myself guilty of an injustice, did I not unreservedly declare, that the inhabitants treated me with civility, and, usually, with kindness.

ON the 11th, at Chandpour—12 coffes. Finding the want of a servant subjected me to various inconveniences, especially from the dislike of the Serauce keepers to rub down my horse, which is I believe, the only scruple they entertain, I took into my service an old soldier, who by his own story had been engaged in many a fell encounter: nor did his figure belye it, for amongst the numerous desperate marks of his profession, he bore one on his face which had wholly excavated the right eye.

ON the 11th, at the village of Burroo—twelve coffes. This place affords no public accommodation for passengers: but the
pompous

pompous language of the old warrior, who entitled me a Moghul officer of the Vizier's, going to join the army then forming against the Sicques, procured a hospitable reception; nor did he fail to reap the advantage of our borrowed character.

ON the 12th, at Najebabad—eleven coffes. Najeb-ud-Dowlah,* who built this town, saw that its situation would facilitate the commerce of Kashmire, which having been diverted from its former channel of Lahore and Dehli, by the inroads of the Sicques, Mahrattas, and Afghans, took a course through the mountains at the head of the Punjab, and was introduced into the Rohilla country through the Lall Dong pass. This inducement, with the desire of establishing a mart for the Hindoos of the adjacent mountains, probably influenced the choice of this spot; which otherwise is not favorable for the site of a capital town, being low, and surrounded with swampy grounds. About a year after the death of this chief, the fort of Najeb Ghur, which is contiguous to the town, was attacked by the Mahrattas, who had compelled Shah Alum, the reigning emperor, to accompany their army. The garrison made a good defence, and would not, it is said, have surrendered, had Zabitah Khan, the son of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, then lying in the neighbourhood with a respectable force, moved to its assistance. But without offering to face the enemy, or throw any relief into the fort, he crossed the Ganges, and sought shelter in Ghous Ghur.

* The chief who has been already mentioned in the Rohilla tract.

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Since that period, or rather since the death of its founder, Najebabad has fallen from its former importance, and seems now chiefly upheld by the languishing trade of Kashmire.

A SMALL karavanferah, the only one in the place, being occupied, I thought myself fortunate in getting admittance into a cook's shop, where kabaubs * and stewed beef were dressed in savoury taste, and all the news-mongers, idlers, politicians, and disbanded soldiers, of the quarter, resort. Whilst I was eating my melfs, a boy came in and asked, if any travellers were going to Jumbo or Kashmire, as the kafilah † would depart on the next day. On enquiring particularly into the state of this intelligence, I learned, that about one hundred mules, laden with raw silk, and cotton cloths, and ordinary callicoes, for the Jumbo ‡ market, had already moved to the skirts of the town. Having been furnished with a letter to a banker at Najeb Ghur, who has the general charge of dispatching kafilahs, I was introduced by him to the merchants, who received me without hesitation. When interrogated on the score of my business, I described myself as a Turk, going to Kashmire to purchase shawls. The Turkish language being in these parts wholly unknown, and as traders of various nations often carry into Kashmire bills, or specie only, my story

* Meat minced and dressed in the manner of what culinary language calls, *forced-meat balls*; but *kabaub*, in a general sense, is any roasted food.

† Karavan. — *Kafilah* is the term peculiar to India and Persia.

‡ A town situate about 200 miles to the S. E. of Kashmire.

obtained

obtained a general credit. After a mature consideration of the personal qualities of my servant, which, poor fellow, had been much impaired by time and adverse fortune, they were condemned as altogether unfit for the service that lay before us; and one of the passengers ill-naturedly observed, that a man should have all his eyes about him who attempted to penetrate into Kashmire. To fill up this vacancy, (for dreading the difficulties of the journey, he himself expressed a reluctance to proceed), I had the good fortune to obtain a Kashmirian, who was at all points qualified for my purpose. He had travelled through a great part of India and Afghanistan, and I soon discovered, that together with an infinite resource in every embarrassment, he possessed a fund of curious history, which he did not fail to embellish with a large share of humour and vanity. But I will sum up his eulogy, and at once tell you that he was, take him for all in all, one of the best servants I had ever known; and could I have acquired the art of qualifying a rather too redundant share of acidity and warmth of disposition, he would have proved a treasure to me. Being well versed in all the scheme of an Indian journey, he made the necessary preparations, and took on him every trouble; so I could now freely indulge my pleasures, which centred chiefly in hearing and telling stories, and smoking my pipe.

On the 14th, at Ramnaghur — nine coffes. This village is in ruins, but having a large well of water, it is usually made the first northern halting place from Vajzibabad.

On

THE country from Najeb Ghur to this frontier is chiefly a waste, over-run with low wood, and is ill supplied with water, there being none in the space from Ramnaghur to the neighbourhood of Lall Dong. The inhabitants say, that in the time of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, the land now overgrown with wood, was a cultivated plain; but such is the precarious state of the native territories of Hindostan, from the inert disposition which, with little deviation, pervades the body of the people, that its welfare must largely depend on the ability and executive talents of one man; and a succession of able rulers, being a rare event in the history of nations, we are not to wonder at the ruinous state into which many of the most valuable provinces of Hindostan have fallen. But on the other hand, the efforts of an active prince, are ever followed by rapid success. Habitations are at a moderate expence speedily erected, and the implements of agriculture are of so simple and easy a construction, that most husbandmen, with a very small help of an artificer, can make their own machines.

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the north side of the rivulet, the kafilah encamped on the Siring-naghur quarter, where we were all seen busily engaged in preparing for the ensuing journey of three days, which lay through a forest. The weather during the day, growing now extremely hot, it was necessary to provide some covering in substitute of a tent. I therefore made a purchase of a large black kummul, or blanket, which being slantingly extended over a slight bamboo frame, composed of a ridge pole upheld by two supporters, and fastened below by small pins, formed a commodious and portable lodging. My baggage, corresponding with the strength of my horse, was composed of a thin mattrafs, a quilt, a canvas portmanteau, containing a few shifts of linen, which supplied also the place of a pillow, and the aforementioned kummul. These necessaries, with an oil bag carried by the Kashmirian, afforded a sufficient accommodation; nor should any person travelling in my manner, have more equipage. A larger will raise unfavorable conjectures, and subject him to frequent investigation, delay, and taxes.

ON the 22d, the kafilah moved, and penetrating six coffes, through the mountains, by a north-west course, halted for the benefit of its water, near a small stream. In this day's journey, I had many occasions of seeing that our mules* were strong and sure-footed. It was wonderful to observe the ease and dexterity with which these animals, heavily laden, clambered up steep and

* They are brought into the northern parts of India, from Afghanistan.

rugged

rugged paths. The proprietors of the goods, chiefly residents of Benares, Lucknow, and Furruckabad, had appointed agents to accompany the kafilah, who are not the ultimate venders of the merchandize, but contract to deliver it, and pay the different duties at some destined mart. To shelter the packages from the inclemency of the weather, a small complement of tents is provided, as it rarely happens that a kafilah halts at any inhabited place. A plentiful supply of water, and a plain for the accommodation of the cattle, is all that is sought for. The carriers say also, that a plain more effectually secures them against theft.

ON the 23d, proceeded 9 coffes further into the forest, and halted near a large water course. This day an occurrence happened which involved me in a serious difficulty. The intense heat of the weather, and the fatigue of walking over a tract of deep sand, induced me, after passing it, to indulge in my pipe. During this regale, which I enjoyed under the shade of a tree, the kafilah had gone out of sight. The ground in front being thickly covered with leaves, no appearance of a road was discernible; and my horse, when I mounted, was so much alarmed, that he would not, but with great reluctance, move in any direction. Whether the animal, from any instinctive power, perceived the embarrassment of our situation, or that its organs of smell were sensible of the effluvia which is emitted from the body of most wild beasts, I will not presume to determine: though I was induced to ascribe its agitation to the first cause, having been once placed in a similar
B b 2 situation,

situation, with the difference, that no animals of prey, or of the large size, were in the neighbourhood. After traversing the forest in various directions without perceiving the appearance of tract or habitation, or the vestige of any creature, except great quantities of elephants dung, I, at length, fell into a narrow path, which leading through a long space of woody desert, brought me to a village; whence the people with much kindness conducted me to our halting place.

ON the 24th, at Jumah, a few scattered houses—four coffes. This hamlet lies within a mile of the Ganges, which, there, has nearly a southern course, and is about two hundred yards broad; with a depth of water from ten to fifteen feet. About half a mile below the place of passage, is a bed of rocks, extending from the east side more than half way across the river, on which the stream breaks with some force. The Ganges doth not here, as in your more happy land, roll its tide through a country spread with fertile plains and populous villages, whose inhabitants live in peace and plenty. Here, a thick gloomy forest, tenanted only by the beasts of the field, skirts it on the eastern side; and on the other, an uncultivated flat, over-run with low wood.

ON the 25th, crossed the river at the ferry of Nackerghaut, which is about twelve miles above Hurdwar; the kafilah being to remain some days at Jumah, I quitted it, and, accompanied by the Kashmirians, I joined a small party of merchants carrying cotton to the town of Nhan. The officer stationed on the western
side

side of the Ganges for the collection of customs, laid me under a contribution of two rupees ; alledging, that as I seemed to travel much at my ease, I must be well enabled to pay that sum. It was to little purpose urging that I did not possess any property on which duties could be collected, or the justice of levying a tax on a traveller. My argument was held wholly inadmissible, and that of the custom-house officer being supported by a party of match lock men, I gave up, with decent resignation, the unequal contest. When the long roll of galling taxes imposed on other nations, esteemed more enlightened and humane than the mountaineers of Siringnaghur, is considered, we shall probably not judge the measure rigorous, which obliges those riding at their ease to contribute to the relief of a state that affords a safeguard to their persons by its salutary government.

ON the 26th, arrived at the village of Khalfawala — seven coffes. The kafilah halted this day on a pleasant green plain adjoining to the village, and skirted by a wood, through which a transparent stream flowed in many a winding channel. From its alluring appearance, though the weather was cold, I was induced to bathe ; and to prevent interruption, I strayed into the thickest part of the wood, which I found abounding in peacocks, and a variety of other birds, one of which resembled the common fowl, but of a smaller size, and of very active flight.

ON the 28th, at Dayrah, the residence of the deputy of the Siringnaghur rajah. This small town, which is populous and
neatly

nearly built, may be called the capital of the lower division * of Siringnaghur, which includes a space of level country lying between a chain of scattered hills on the south, and the larger range of northern mountains. The Sicques have an unrestrained access into these parts through the southern hills, which are broken by small valleys; and, fearing no opposition from Zabitan Khan, they can at pleasure penetrate into the lower districts of Siringnaghur. The chief resides at a town bearing the common name of the territory, which lies, I am informed, about one hundred miles to the north, and by the east of Lall Dong. The inactivity of the present rajah has enabled the Sicques to exact from this country a regular tribute.† Of what superior courage and resource was that chief of Siringnaghur, who, in defiance of Aurungzebe, the most powerful prince of his time, protected the son ‡ of Dara, brother of the emperor, and his deadly foe, regardless of every menace. But he fell to the *sacra fames auri*, the most destructive evil, my friend, which Pandora's box let loose upon the sons of man. It hath often armed the son against the father, hath sown dissention in the marriage bed, and broken the tie of honour, and the bonds of friendship.

To adjust the account of the Siringnaghur customs, the kafilah halted until the 15th, when we proceeded to Kheynsapoor —

* It is called the *dsone*, or low country.

† Said to be four thousand rupees annually.

‡ See Bernier's account of Sipahi Sheko's retreat into Siringnaghur.

ten coffes. At this place, I saw two Sicque horsemen, who had been sent from their country to receive the Siringnaghur tribute, which is collected from the revenue of certain custom-houses. From the manner in which these men were treated, or rather treated themselves, I frequently wished for the power of migrating into the body of a Sicque for a few weeks — so well did these cavaliers fare. No sooner had they alighted than beds were provided for their repose, and their horses were supplied with green barley pulled out of the field. The kafilah travellers were contented to lodge on the ground, and expressed their thanks for permission to purchase what they required; — such is the difference between those who were in, and those who were out of power.

On the 6th of March crossed the Jumna, and halted on the western banks — eight coffes. It flows with a clear stream to the south-east, and has about the same breadth with the Ganges.* Fish abound in this part of the Jumna, as I myself saw; but I believe the adjacent inhabitants do not use any means of catching them. No cultivation is seen in the vicinity of the Jumna, though a spacious plain extends on the western side, and might be watered without much difficulty from the river. The Siringnaghur territory, which here terminates, is bounded on the north and the north-east, by the districts of independent Hindoo Rahahs;

* It is to be noticed, that I crossed these rivers at the season of their lowest ebb.

on

on the south, by Oude; on the west and north-west, by the Jumna; and the south-west, by the dominions of the Sicques. From Lall Dong to the Ganges, the country forms with little interruption a continued chain of woody hills. The elephant, which abounds in these forests, but of a size and quality inferior to that found in the Chittagong and Malay quarters, is here only valued for its ivory. From the Ganges to the Jumna, the road lies through an extensive valley, of a good soil, but thinly inhabited, and interspersed with wood. The food of the people is wheaten bread and pease, the latter being usually made into a soup; and, believe me, that in the course of my life I never eat a meal with a higher relish. Vigorous health, indeed, daily labour, and a clear air, will recommend to the appetite worse things than wheaten cakes and pease-soup. The attempt to ascertain the revenue of a country in which I have been so cursory a sojourner, would be presumptuous, I will therefore generally say, that Siringnaghur is computed to give an annual produce of about twenty lacks of rupees. The officer on the western side of the Jumna, taxed me in the sum of two rupees; alledging, that being merely a passenger, and unconnected with any traffic from which an advantage would arise to the country, that I was taxable in myself. The same argument being held as at the Siringnaghur pass, and esteeming myself fortunate at falling under no minuter notice, I paid the fine with pleasure.

On the 7th, at Karidah — eight coffes; and on the 8th, at Coleroon

Coleroon — seven coffes, — hamlets of a few houses. Here two Kashmirians, a Sunassee,* myself and servant, quitted the kafilah, and on the 9th, arrived at Nhan — eight coffes; the residence of the chief of a territory of the same name; and who on the day of our arrival, made a public entry into the town after a long absence. A division of the Nhan country extends to the southward of the head of the Punjab, and bordering the country of the Sicques, they agreeably to a conduct observed with all their weaker neighbours, took possession of it. The Rajah armed himself to recover the districts in question, but after a desultory warfare in which he acquired much military credit, he was obliged to sue for peace; nor were the conquered lands restored until he consented to remit a tribute of two thousand rupees to a certain Sicque chief. This sum you will doubtless deem trifling, and it is so in your country, where specie is plenty, and the mode of living conformably luxurious and extravagant. But amongst these mountaineers, whose manners are rude and simple, who seek for little else than the necessaries of life, which are produced to them in great abundance, this amount is important, and to collect it, requires even oppressive exertion.

THE inhabitants, and the foreign merchants of the town, were laid under a severe contribution for the maintenance of this war;

* The name of a Hindoo tribe, chiefly composed of mendicants; though I have seen a Sunassee conducting an extensive commerce.

and the chief having now discovered the weight which the people can bear, it is probable that he will continue to reap the benefit of the impost, though the cause is removed. The Rajah of Nhan made an entry into his capital, not as Alexander entered Babylon, but with some dozen horsemen, sorrily clad, and very slenderly mounted. Had they indeed been better equipped, both themselves and horses would have shewn to little advantage, after clambering up at least six miles of a steep mountain, on the summit of which the small, though neat, town of Nhan stands. This chief, a handsome young man, of a bright olive complexion, and taller than the middle size, was dressed in a vest of yellow silk, and a red turban; and he was armed with a sabre, a bow, and a quiver of arrows. Though he has made them groan with exactions, he is a great favourite of the people. But he is young and brave, and he liberally disburses what he extorts. The joy invariably expressed by the crowds who came to congratulate his safe return, gave me a sensible pleasure. They saluted him without noise or tumult, by an inclination of the body, and touching the head with the right hand; hailing him at the same time their father and protector. The chief, whilst passing, spoke to them in terms affectionate and interesting, which, like a stroke of magick, seemed in an instant to erase every trace of grievance. Such were the advantages which pleasing manners and a liberality of temper, joined to the other alluring qualities of a soldier, gave to this prince; and will, unfortunately for their subjects, give to every prince of similar endowments.

endowments on the face of the earth. Would it not be more productive of the welfare of mankind, that instead of these clinquant virtues, a despotic ruler possessed a disposition thoroughly impregnated with vice; that with his tyranny, he united cowardice and envy, avarice and arrogance? The subjects of such a prince, would be the sooner impelled to break the disgraceful yoke, and by a successful example, promote the general cause of civil liberty.

A SPECIES of fascination I find has now caught me, and I cannot quit the ground without introducing on it, which I do with a profound reverence for his memory, and entreating forgiveness of his shade for classing him in such company, the illustrious Julius Cæsar, who may be quoted to confirm the truth of the foregoing position. Cato's supposed reflection on the character of this hero, concludes with imprecating his virtues, for they had ruined his country. No fact of ancient or modern history, has, perhaps, given more literary pleasure, than the life of Cæsar; nor perhaps is any record of the ancient annals better authenticated. Had that great man restored with peace, the liberty of his country; had Cæsar cherished the fire of the Roman senate, he would have had no parallel on earth. Yet, "if Cæsar did wrong, he suffered grievously for it."—An exemplary humanity, of rare growth in his day, was the native virtue of Cæsar, and is ever the genuine attendant of a great soul. The humane exercise of power throws even a lustre on characters that else would deserve our reproach; but it adorns the soldier with unfulfilled radiancy, and

imparts to his laurels a bloom, which otherwise are viewed with horror, and exhibit only a badge of cruelty and rapine.

ON the 12th, at noon, I left Nhan, and that evening halting at the village of Saleannah, situate at the bottom of the hill, and four cosses distant from the town. In this quarter I first saw, since I left Europe, the fir tree,* and the willow, which, as in our country, delights in hanging over a stream. From the top of the Nhan hill, the plains of Sirhend present a wide prospect to the south-east, south, and south-west: the view to the northward is terminated at a short distance by snowy mountains. Little danger being now incured from travelling in small bodies, as the mountains compose a barrier against the depredations of the Sieques or other marauders, our party from this place to Bellaspour was small. To assist my servant I had entertained a Kashmirian trader in small wares, who accompanied me from Najeb Ghur; and he was at all times a useful and a pleasant companion.

ON the 13th. at Sudowra — twelve cosses; a village on a high hill of steep ascent. The road this day led through a woody and mountainous country, abounding, we were told, with a variety of wild beasts. A tyger had newly marked our path with the impression of his feet, and being then informed that this creature always attacks animals in preference to men, I immediately dismounted, and led my poor little horse. The tyger, and I believe

* That species of it called the Scots fir.

generally,

generally, the feline species, possess but a small share of courage, and seldom openly seizes its prey; but, lurking in concealment, attacks by surprise, and if unsuccessful steals away into a hiding place without returning to the onset; and, in contradistinction to the canine species, whose great strength lies in the jaw, the feline strike their prey with the fore feet and talons. It is said that a tyger having once tasted human flesh, becomes fond of it, and gratifies his appetite when it can be done without encountering any conspicuous danger. Yet it would appear, that all animals have a dread of man, which proceeding from the novelty of his appearance, or perhaps some instinctive fear of his powers of offence, prompts them, when not furious with hunger, to shun the contest. — This evening, I was comfortably lodged in the front of a Hindoo retail shop, where an excellent mess of pease and wheaten cakes was served up to us. Pray excuse me for noting this domestic concern, which is to me of great moment; for by such wholesome meals, my strength was unimpaired, and my daily progress made with vigour. Covered quarters during the night was what we anxiously fought after, but did not always obtain. The Hindoos, though hospitably disposed to travellers, are averse to admitting Mahometans, whom they hold unclean, into any part of their houses.

ON the 14th, at Lawasah — six coffies; — a few scattered houses. This day's journey consisted in climbing steep mountains, and though my little horse was as active as a goat, I was obliged,

obliged, from the almost perpendicular height, to walk the greatest part of the way. For the benefit of such travellers who may come within your knowledge, and be disposed to pursue my track, you must inform them that the shop-keeper at Lawafah is a great rogue, a noisy wrangler, and mixes a great quantity of barley with his wheat-meal. As he is the only man of his profession in the place, there is no remedy for the evil but laying in a stock at Sudowra, where they will find honest treatment, and lodging to boot. Though it is not very probable that this recommendation will be of material use to the honest man at Sudowra, yet I feel a pleasure in mentioning his goodness to me.

ON the 15th at Coultie — nine coffes; — two or three scattered houses. The Nhan country is bounded here by the small district of Bojepour, which depends on the Bellaspour chief. — On the 16th, halted on the bank of a nulla — seven coffes. Met on the road a Kashmirian family, consisting of a goldsmith, his wife, and some children, who were travelling to some town on the borders of Thibet, where they intended to settle.

ON the 17th, at Kunda, a small village — eight coffes, and about five miles to the north-west of Durmpour, the residence of the chief of a small district, generally subject to the authority of the Bellaspour government. At Durmpour I paid a duty of two rupees for passing my horse

ON the 13th, at Gowrah — nine coffes. I halted during the heat of the day near a water mill, the first I had seen in India.

It was

It was constructed on the principle of the like machine in Europe, but of more simple mechanism and coarser workmanship. About two o'clock in the morning, I observed an eclipse of the moon, the body of which continued partially shaded for near two hours. In the evening, our little party went to a farmer's cottage, where we solicited permission to lodge our baggage, and to sleep under one of his sheds. The farmer candidly said, looking stedfastly in my face, which he seemed not to like, that he was apprehensive that an out-side lodging would not satisfy us. It was with much difficulty he would believe that we had sought his house only for shelter, and it was not until the Kashmirian had shewn him some small wares for sale, that we were suffered to occupy the front of his house. The districts of Hundah and Gowrah, are denominated the Barrah Tukrah,* being certain portions of territory bequeathed by a chief of Bellaspour to his younger son, some fifty years ago. These petty states are ill governed, and it is only among them that the traveller, from the Ganges to Kashmire, incurs the risk of being pillaged.

On the 19th, at the Village of Tayanaghur — ten coffes. On the 20th, at Bellaspour — twelve coffes, the residence of the Ranee or female ruler of the Kalour territory. This town stands on the south-east side of the Setlud or Sutludge, the most easterly of the five rivers, from which the name of Punjah † is given to the tract of

* A term in the Hinduee, signifying twelve portions.

† A Persian word, signifying five waters.

country

country extending from Sirhend to the Indus. The Setlound, a very rapid stream, is at this place about one hundred yards broad. Bellaspour is a well built town, and exhibits a regularity not often seen in these parts. The streets are paved, though rather roughly; and the houses, constructed of stone and mortar, have a neat appearance. Kalour is bounded to the northward by the Kangrah districts; to the eastward by a large tract of country called Buseer; to the southward by Nhan; and to the westward by the Punjab; and its revenue is said to amount to twelve lacks of rupees. On my arrival at Bellaspour, I found the Raneé engaged in a war with the chief of Kangrah, on the limits of whose country her army was then encamped. It may not edify or perhaps entertain you to know the cause of this fell dispute, which however had taken such possession of the minds of the mountaineers, and to them was so important an event, that they seemed to think the hills and forests of Bellaspour the seat of universal war. The siege of Troy, and the conflicts on the Scamander, would have appeared as mere skirmishes to these sylvan heroes; and they probably would have allowed no other degree of comparison, than that women were the cause of them both. But as I myself became involuntarily interested in their story, and having little other matter to communicate, I am induced to intrude a sketch of it on your patience,

To deduce this eventful matter *ab ovo*, I must call your attention to the Days of Achar, who is said to have been the first Mahometan

metan prince who reduced the northern mountains of Hindostan to the obedience of the empire. Towards the northern limit of Kalour, is a strong hold on an eminence, called the Kote Kangrah, the reduction of which detained Acbar, who commanded the expedition in person, a whole year, according to the tradition of this quarter. To reward one of his officers who had signalized himself in this service, he bestowed on him the captured fort, with a considerable space of adjacent territory. The descendants of this chief who are of the Sheah's sect of Mahometans, continued in the possession until the present period, when the Rajah of Kangrah, on some pretence, laid the districts waste, and besieged the fort. Unable himself to repel the Enemy, the Mahometan solicited the aid of the Bellaspour Ranee, who with the spirit of a heroine, afforded speedy and vigorous succour to her neighbour, whose cause she has already revenged by plundering and destroying almost every village of Kangrah; the chief of which now vainly asserts, that the Ranee, seeing his country destitute of defence, seized, under the colour of assisting her ally, the occasion of augmenting her own power.

HALTED on the 21st and 22d, at Bellaspour. These wars did not a little derange our measure of progress, especially as there was attached to the Kangrah army, through which we must necessarily pass, a body of Sicques, who had impressed, with a lively terror, even this sequestered region. The two Kashmirians, now

my only associates, were averse to any motion until we should be reinforced. After much entreaty they consented to accompany me to the Bellaspour camp, where the probability of meeting passengers going to the northward, they were obliged to confess, was greater than in the town. But to a rooted indolence, the common want of enterprize presides over all the actions of an Indian; and here let me observe, that our principal superiority over them, will largely consist in attacking this weak side. The prompt decision of our councils, the vigour of action, must in every contest with them command success. This constitutional inactivity and languor of the mind, have been farther promoted by the creed of predestination, and astrology. A minute attention is shewn by the natives of India to certain days, hours, and minutes. On the commencement of any service, or in the performance of even the ordinary duties of life, their conduct is regulated by the immediate period; and should the calculator discover a reluctance, or desire of delay in his employer, or apprehend that his own reputation might suffer in the event, he usually lays a bar on the undertaking. Over such men what advantage do we not possess? Yet in some of the late military transactions of India, we have weakened our claim to those natural and acquired powers, which English soldiers in most of their actions have displayed in this country. Do not misconstrue the tendency of this digression, and mark me as an abettor of the incursions and depredations which we are occasionally
used

used to make on the lands of our neighbours. Our conduct to one * of them has been as unjust as it was unwise, nor do I know whether to attribute the favourable conclusion of the event † to good fortune, or to the folly of our enemies.

On the evening of the 23d, crossed in a ferry-boat, the Setlound, a narrow deep and rapid river, full of windings, and halted at a small village opposite to Bellaspour, though the distance from the ferry was nearly two miles from the town. A Tumboo-shall kafilah had encamped on the north side of the town on its way to Dehli and Lucknow, with the proprietors of which, or rather their agents, I formed an acquaintance; and through their influence with the collector of the customs I was permitted to pass without obstacle. This assistance was the more opportune, as the Bellaspour government is deemed jealous and oppressive. The collector extended his favour even to a length that I had not expected, for he not only expedited my passage through the Bellaspour districts, but gave me a recommendatory letter to his brother, who was the manager of the Kangrah custom house. The people of the Tumboo kafilah were desirous of knowing my story, and you also, perhaps, would wish to be informed of the present one, certain parts of which, on hearing that the Turkish language was spoken by a person of the party, I compiled for the use of the day. God only

* The Mahrattas

† The convention of Wargaum, which covered us with disgrace.

knows, my friend, what a varied multiplicity of fictions I have formed in the course of this journey: and I have to supplicate his pardon for the fabrication, as well as to hope for your acquiescence in the necessity. The tenor of my story sets forth, that I was by birth a Turk, and had come when young to India, where I was taken into the house of a person of distinction who had brought me up. That from my long residence in India I had forgotten my native language, and that my profession had been chiefly that of a soldier, which quitting on a disgust, I had collected my little property and become a travelling merchant. The story, not very complex, possessed plausibility sufficient to procure common belief, and I myself had entered so warmly into its spirit, that I began to believe it. I must here inform you, that having been seen two or three times writing on the road, I was told by one of the passengers that it was an European custom, and a very useless one. The remark alarmed me, but I told him without much hesitation, that I had been always accustomed to write my current expences, that at the end of the year I might ascertain the amount, and not exceed my income. My remarks were usually noted in a rude Persian character, but whilst I was writing an English letter from this place, a Kashmirian who was sitting near me, and who had formerly served on board one of our country ships, observed, that I wrote from the left to the right in the European manner: but on being told that the Turks used the same method, he seemed satisfied. From an inattention to one of the forms of my new character,

rafter, instead of sitting down, as the Asiatics invariably do in the performance of urinal evacuation, I used occasionally to stand upright ; and being severely reprehended for this uncleanness, I alledged that the habit was not uncommon amongst soldiers, who from the hurry of service, and their dissipated course of life, make many deviations from the rules of decorum. But the want of penetration, or the good humour in which we lived together, has prevented my companions from seeing through my disguise, which I now entertain sanguine hopes of preserving to the end of my journey.

I am, dear Sir,

Your's, &c. &c.

LETTER

LETTER X.

Nourpour, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

ON the 22d of last month, I had the pleasure of describing to you my journey from Lall Dong to Bellaspour, and I can now with pleasure say, that unhurt by the Sicques, tygers, or thieves, I am safely lodged in Nourpour, the principal town of a district of the same name. From the western bank of the Setlound, we proceeded on the 24th of March to the village of Comour Hattee, eight coffes. An Hattee, which in the language of this country signifies retail shop, affords the best accommodation for a traveller, and I always endeavoured to make one my halting place. There I procured wheat, wheat-meal, pease, and ghee,* of which my common fare is composed, and by the applying in civil terms, the shop keeper commonly indulged me with the use of the front part of his shop.

ON the 25th, in the Bellaspour army — ten coffes. It will not demand the pen of Homer to describe the different powers which

* Butter boiled, in which state it is always used for culinary purposes in India.

formed

formed this camp; their strength, the names and characters of their leaders, or the situation of the ground which they occupied: suffice it to say, that about 300 horses, and 8000 foot-men, armed with match-locks, swords, spears, and clubs, were huddled together on two sides of a hill, in a deep state of confusion and filth. Having resided for the space of four months in this spot under small sheds made of the boughs of trees, you will naturally suppose, that the effects resulting from the situation could neither have been pleasant or salutary. In all, were four very ordinary tents, one of which was occupied by the generalissimo, a brother, and I believe an elder one, of the late chief of Bellaspour; for the order of succession in the line of primogeniture, is not at this day strictly adhered to in India, either amongst the Hindoos, or Mahometans. This personage, from age, being incapable of performing any active duty, had appointed a younger brother to the executive command. The Ranee, with her son, a youth of about ten years of age, and a favourite Sunnassée, had retired during the war to an adjacent fort, where she directed the general operation of the war. Having entered thus far into the history of Bellaspour, I will proceed to explain some parts of the story of this lady, which as they tend to place female conduct in a distinguished point of view, I embrace the occasion with pleasure. And here permit me to declare with a fervent sincerity, and an honourable sense of the dignity of character to which I aspire, that I am a zealous friend of women, and that as far as the offering of my mite will contribute to their aid, or to a display

a display of their various merit, it shall be held forth with a willing hand.

QUITTING these encomiums on myself rather than on the sex, I am to inform you that the Bellaspour Ranee, on the death of the late chief, which happened about three or four year ago, declared herself the guardian of her son, and regent of the country. She was opposed in this purpose by her husband's brother, the person who now commands the army; and she had also to combat the many difficulties incident in this country to her sex, the most embarrassing of which was a preclusion from public appearance; yet baffling every attempt made to subvert her authority, she firmly established herself in the government.* The event of the Ranee's success, brought on the confinement of her competitor; but after a short time, during which he experienced a lenient treatment, he was released. This dame of spirit, who hath evinced strong traits of a disposition fitted for conducting either military or civil schemes and who hath hitherto been fortunate in them, is at this day enthralled by the force of love. Whether this passion is to be classed amongst the alloys of our virtues, according to the doctrine of the most rigid moralists, or whether it heightens the lustre of those

* It has already been observed in the letter on Hindoo mythology, that amongst the Hindoos a woman on the demise of the husband becomes an inefficient member in the family, but in the present day this ordinance is often over-ruled by the intervention of power, wealth, or intrigue. In this note it may not be improper to mention, that the Hindoos use the epithet, "widowed," as descriptive of futility, or of any contemptible and nugatory act.

already possessed, and even creates good qualities in us, as the elegant Yorick has advanced, are questions submitted, with a due deference to the intricacy of the subject, to those who are skilled in the extensive passion of love. The object of this lady's favour I saw, and the choice she has made is a proof of good taste. He is a young handsome Hindoo, of a religious tribe, who, contrary to the usage of his sect, which is founded on rules almost as severe as those of the Carthusians, dresses gayly, and in the Mahometan fashion. From a certain levity, though politeness of manners, set off by the delicate fancy of his apparel, you at the first glance pronounce him a favourite of the women. Such are the changes which love can produce, even amongst a people who observe their religious ordinances with a scrupulousness irreconcilable to common sense, and which in some instances border on gross absurdity.* Thus much for the Ranee of Bellaspour, to whom be all success!

I now learned that my progress towards the Kangrah army, would without the protection of an escort, be attended with much risk. In order to procure so essential an accommodation I waited on the commander in chief, then sitting under a banian tree, and attended by his principal officers, the greater part of them clad in native buff. Some new levies were passing in review before him, that had come in from the country, or rather the woods;

* In the neighbourhood of Benares is a sect of religious Hindoos, who it is said forbear making any use of their hands, even on the most necessary occasions; but are fed and assisted by others.

for

for they bore a strong resemblance to the description given in heathen story of the satyrs, fawns, and other branches of the sylvan race; nor do I think that all the powers of a Prussian drill sergeant, extensive as they are, could have impressed on them a competent knowledge of military discipline. On approaching the chief, I made him an offering of a rupee, laid on the corner of my vest. You will be pleased to notice, that the piece of money is, not to be placed on the naked hand, but on a handkerchief, or some part of the garment held out for that purpose; and though the superior shall be disposed to favour the client, yet from motives of generosity, or an attention to his condition, it often happens, that he does not take the offering, but touches it with his finger. The honour is then supposed to be conferred, and the hope of obtaining protection or assistance, if sought for, is entertained. The chief received me with civility, and complied with the request, that our party might be permitted to accompany the first messenger who should be dispatched into the Kangrah camp; and he also intimated, that some letters which were preparing, would soon be forwarded. He looked obliquely at my offering, which he touched, but would not receive. A day or two afterwards, I discovered this mountaineer to be composed of the same materials, which with few deviations form the common disposition of the natives of India. On visiting him a second time, attended only by the cotewaul,*

* An officer of police.

(also the acting master of ceremonies), I was told that I might present my offering, which being an Alum Shahee rupee,* a coin of rather an inferior value in this quarter, I was received with a frown, and my money underwent a strict examination. Would you not imagine that I had been bargaining with a Jew pedlar, instead of conferring with the chief of a country? Though I was mortified at beholding among us so glaring a meanness and want of decorum, yet as a trait of national character was disclosed, I received some satisfaction in obtaining so unequivocal a testimony of it. In further proof of the inconsistency of conduct, as well as a want of fortitude in the people of this country, I am induced to relate to you an event, (though foreign to the immediate purpose of this letter) that came within my own knowledge. At the time when the Mahometans were driven from Kattuck, the chief of that territory fled to Bengal, where having expended the amount of the treasure and moveables that had been preserved, he went to the coast of Coromandel, and was received into the list of pensioners maintained by the Navaub of the Carnatic. During the regular payment of the allowance, this man enjoyed ease; and by the shew of a palanquin, and a respectable retinue, he maintained a certain state. The provision which the Navaub at that time found it expedient to make for pensioners of a higher order, caused a deduction from the stipend of his Kattuck dependant, who then

* A rupee of the present reign.

laid

laid down his palanquin, and purchased a small horse. This was doubtless a mortifying degradation ; but the cup of his sorrow was not yet full : for on a greater reduction, and at length, a total abolition of the pension, this poor man losing sight of the character he had supported, and blinded by a vanity which discouraged all industrious exertion for a livelihood, became notoriously addicted to fraud, and petty-thefts ; and was scarcely saved from an ignominious end. I have quoted these examples, thinking them more conclusive in conveying to you a knowledge of character, than any speculative observation. But when the mind at an early period, is not accustomed to behold and admire examples of integrity and honor, or taught to shun with horror and contempt the habits of vice ; on the contrary, when the instruction given to youth, tends to appreciate the duties of life by the performance of futile ceremonies, and the study of legends pregnant with fable, or violent prejudices, we are not to wonder at such acts of depravity.

THE flies tormented me so much in the Bellaspour army, that I could not but with difficulty secure my food from their vile attacks. A certain quantity of poison I believe is contained in the body of an Indian fly, for on swallowing it, a nausea and vomiting almost immediately succeed. I had imagined that the sickness might proceed from the motion of the insect in the stomach, but on examining one after it had been discharged, I perceived it without life, though but a very short time deprived of its natural air.

The

The intense heat of the stomach indeed, must speedily cause the suffocation of so small an animal.

Our situation in the Bellaspour camp was disgusting and incommodious. The heat was in the extreme, with a compound of smells arising from the filth of the people, that grossly tainted the air : and I became so anxious to escape, that I had determined to embrace any mode of operation which might lead to a change of quarters. This eagerness had almost produced a measure, which probably would have caused a material failure of my plan. Two messengers who were to convey proposals of peace to the Kangrah camp, promised to conduct our party thither in safety, and I had resolved to commit myself to their charge, though much opposed by my associates, who decidedly said, that these men would betray us. The chief's chobedar,* a brother Mahometan, also endeavoured to impress me with an ill opinion of these messengers. Had they formed any scheme of mischief, it was happily frustrated on the evening previously to our intended departure, by the arrival of a drove of asses, laden with iron, who were pursuing our route. On the 29th, the joint party moved, and had arrived at the boundary of Bellaspour, eight miles distant from the camp, when our troubles came thick upon us. Two of the Kangrah horsemen appeared in front, and passing me, went towards the rear, where they plundered the ironmengers to the amount of one hundred

* A person who carries a silver stick before men in high station.

rupees,

rupees, which is accounted a large sum in these parts. They seized also on a Kashmirian, who was lagging behind, and were in the act of stripping him, when he loudly cried out, which was not true, that he was my servant, and that I was a person of some distinction. This intelligence induced the horsemen to follow me; but on approaching, one of them observed that I had the appearance of a *balla audimee*,* and should not suffer any molestation; that only stragglers, and single travellers fell under their notice. Seeing them disposed to this civil treatment, I procured the Kashmirian's release, as also that of my own servant, who had come up during the parley, and had been likewise taken into custody. It was, I believe, a fortunate event for the prisoners that I returned, for our cavaliers were then in quest of prey, nor did they seem nice in the distinctions of persons; for whilst I remained, some stray passengers were laid under contribution, from one of whom, an ass driver, they took a pair of shoes. We were informed that two hundred Sicques who had been lately entertained in the Kangrah service, would soon appear. Aware of the licentious manners of the disciples of Nanock,† especially when employed in foreign service, I would then willingly have sacrificed a moiety of my property to have had the other secured. There was no other remedy than assuming the look of confidence and ease,

* In the Hindostany language, any person above the ordinary class, is so denominated

† The founder of the Sicques.

which,

which, Heaven knows, ill corresponded with my heart : so pushing my horse into a quick trot, I was speedily conveyed into the midst of this formidable corps, who received me very attentively, but without offering any violence. Imagining our approach to have been that of the enemy, the Sicques were preparing for the fight, to which they loudly exclaimed, in the tone of religious ejaculation, that their prophet had summoned them. In token of respect, I had dismounted, and was leading my horse, when a Sicque, a smart fellow, mounted on a active mare, touched me in passing. The high mettled animal, whether in contempt of me or my horse, perhaps of both, attacked us fiercely from the rear, and in the assault, which was violent, the Sicque fell to the ground. The action having commenced on the top of a hill, he rolled with great rapidity to the bottom of it, and in his way down, left behind him his matchlock, sword, and turban : so compleat a derangement I feared, would have irritated the whole Sicque body ; but on evincing the shew of much sorrow for the disaster, and having assiduously assisted in investing the fallen horseman with his scattered appurtenances, I received general thanks.

My good fortune, which had this day repelled a series of perils, conveyed me in safety to the camp of the Kangrah, or as he is often called, from a more ancient name of his country, the Katochin chief. We regaled ourselves this evening with great joy, having suffered from hunger as well as fatigue, though we had only travelled about sixteen or seventeen miles. A small
body,

body, chiefly of horse, was stationed at this camp; the greater part of the forces under the command of the Rajah, being employed in the siege of Kote Kangrah. The common road to Jumbo from hence, lay through Nadone, the principal town in the Kangrah country, and through the district of Huriepour; but these places being then overrun by the Sicques, we were obliged to deviate from the usual track, and proceed to the westward. It is to be feared that these turbulent mountaineers, the disturbers of their solitary abode, will stir up such commotions in their land, as to wholly shut up this road, the only secure one from India to Kashmire, or render the passage so precarious, that no advantage will compensate the risk.*

On the 30th, we moved, and joining the kafilah of the iron merchants again, accompanied it to Sooree — six coshes: — a small village, of which most of the carriers were inhabitants. The halt was made at this village from a desire of the carriers to see their families, for it was at the distance of a full day's journey out of their road. To the eastward of Sooree, which lies in a valley, we crossed a ridge of high and steep mountains.

On the 31st, at Bompal — four coshes: — a small hamlet situated on an eminence. This day's journey was made short for the accommodation of the iron merchants, who went to the Kangrah camp to attempt the recovery of the property which the Sicques

* This apprehension has been since verified.

had plundered; but they returned without redress, and now seemed anxious to leave the country; as instead of procuring a restitution or payment, farther demands had been made. All this night, I was exposed to a continued and copious rain — and here let me observe, with sincere thanks for the blessing of a hale constitution, that though I have, in the course of this journey, endured much severity of weather, my health has hitherto received no injury.

A CONTINUANCE of the rain detained us at Bompal until the 2d of April, when we arrived at Chumbah — eight cosses: — a small village, depending on the chiefship of Jessoul. At a short distance from Bompal, we were stopped by the collector of Nadone, who had come three miles from his house, in defiance of the troubled state of the country, to receive from us a toll duty of a few pence. At about mid-way on the right hand side of the road is seen a place of Hindoo worship, at the foot of which runs the Byas Gunge,* with a rapid stream of about one hundred yards broad.† A great part of the road from Bompal to Chumbah lay through a valley, watered by the Byas, on the north side of which is seen the level and fertile districts of Huriepour. The territory of Kangrah, or Ktochin, is limited on the north, and north-west by Huriepour; on the east by Chumbay; on the south by Kalour; and on the west by the Punjab. The ordinary revenue,

* The second of the Punjab rivers from the Eastward.

† The current runs to the left.

estimated

estimated at seven lacks of rupees, has been much diminished by the chief's alliance with the Sicques, who spread destruction wherever they go. These marauders are now acting the part of the man whom fable represents to have been invited by the horse, to aid his contest with the boar; and you know the uses to which the thoughtless horse was applied, when victory was decided in favour of the combined forces.

THIS day, our little party which had been joined in the Belaspour camp by the Kashmirians, resolved, from a dread of the Sicques, who had invested the common track, to quit the kafilah, and through detached paths endeavour to reach Jumbo. A native trader of India, it is to be observed, holds his time in small estimation, and would rather halt for two or three months, than incur even a common risk.

ON the 3d, at Dada — ten coffes; dependant on the chief of Sebah. From a stream running through the village, we procured some excellent fish, of the size and something of the taste of trouts. This district, by its approach to the head of the Punjab, lies wholly at the mercy of the Sicques, who are I think the plainest dealers in the world. The fort of Sebah,* standing pleasantly on the brink of a rivulet, lay on our road; and in passing it, I saw

* Situate about three coffes to the south-west of Dada, and the only fortified residence I have seen among the mountains. The vicinity of the Punjab has perhaps induced the mountaineers to fortify this place.

two Sicque cavaliers strike a terror into the chief and all his people, though shut up within their fort. They had been sent to collect the tribute which the Sicques have imposed on all the mountain chiefs from the Ganges to Jumbo ; and, offended at the delay of the payment, these high spoken men were holding to the affrightened Hindoos, that style of language, which one of our provincial magistrates would direct at a gipsy, or sturdy beggar. Indeed, my friend, no ordinary exertion of fortitude, no common share of philanthropy is required, to wield with temper the rod of power ; which, from the frailty of his nature, man is ever inclined to use with severity. Yet surely when he looks into himself, he will see many a strong reason to qualify its stroke. From a spirit of impatience, which having long^s actuated me, I am induced to think is innate, I quitted my companions, and going about a mile in front, fell in with a horseman, who had much the appearance of a freebooter ; but being well armed, and evidently the stronger man, I did not apprehend any risk from a rencounter. Seeing me a stranger, and from the quality of my equipment, a fit subject for plunder, he stopped me, and in a peremptory manner, asked my occupation, and place of abode. My answers were neither explanatory nor gracious, and my departure abrupt, though he had expressed a strong desire of farther communication ; and seemed offended at the unconcern of my deportment. About a quarter of a mile farther on, I met a Sicque horseman, well armed, who was evidently in search of adventure. After reconnoitring
me

me attentively, and apprehending, I imagine, that a contest would be of doubtful event, for my sword was long, and my countenance, by the air I had assumed, fierce, he politely saluted me, and passed. The person whom I first saw, had halted, and on the junction of the Sicque, a council was held by them on the subject of my moveables ; the result of which was to return and take them from me. My companions who gave me this information came up while these men of the blade were communing on the plan of attack, and an eclaireissement took place. They discovered that these footmen, four in number, were associates of him, whose property they intended to invade ; and naturally concluded, that how^{ever} decided the odds of two to one might have been, so great an additional strength to our party, would manifestly turn the chances ; and, swayed probably by this forcible argument, they gave us no molestation.

ON the 4th at Tulwara, — ten cosles ; a village in the district of Dutar, where the Sicque chief has erected a small fort, and holds the adjacent territory. The country to the southward now assumed a level aspect, which to me had an effect inexpressibly pleasing ; for my eye had long been disgusted, and, I may say, imprisoned, by mountain piled on mountain, till the highest pierced the clouds. The district of Dutar, or Dutarah, extends on the interior side of the Punjab hills, through which our late southern inclination had penetrated. In this day's journey, our party was reduced to the Kashmirian trader and myself ; three Kashmirians, who

who had joined our party in the Bellaspour camp, went on before, and my servant lagged behind. In the evening, having reached the bottom of a hill, we observed a body of horsemen descending in our road. The sight of these men, who were immediately known to be Sicques, gave a serious alarm; and on their near approach, I deposited, unnoticed by my companions, my little property of bills and cash in an adjacent bush. But we had formed an unjust opinion of these cavaliers; and I am to think myself singularly fortunate, in being enabled in two instances to place their conduct in a favourable point of view. This party, consisting of about two hundred, many of whom were Mahometans, was then marching into the Hurriepour district. Summoning an affected composure of countenance, we affected to smoke our pipes, from which some of the Mahometans took a whiff *en passant*, and at the same time gave us an assurance of protection against any ill designs of their associates; for notwithstanding the looks we had borrowed, they must have seen much embarrassment in them. After their departure, I took my valuables out of the bush without the observance of my companion, who was transported with joy at the escape, swearing, by his beard, that on reaching our evening quarters, he would offer up to Mahomet, or to his national saint Mucdoom Saib, two-pennyworth of brown sugar, in thanksgiving for the extraordinary preservation. We met many of the Sicque stragglers, who are always the most mischievous; these we directed to speedily join their companions, who, we said, had strictly en-
joined

joined us to give such directions ; and this pretended message gave us some credit ; for seeing we had not been plundered by their party, they followed the same meritorious example.

A ~~SHOP~~ HOP-KEEPER accommodated us with a convenient lodging at Tulwara, where, being joined by my servant, who had likewise been involved in the dangers of the day, though he had carefully preserved the remains of the fish that had been procured at Dada, a sumptuous feast was served up, and joyously participated. The truth of this remark will be readily acknowledged by those, who, from the like adventures, have reached in the evening a safe retreat. My friend, who faithfully performed the tenor of his promise, reprobated my insensibility of the providential interposition that had been made in our behalf. It was in vain to urge the merits of internal prayer, or to assert, that I had already offered unfeigned thanks for our escape, which I trusted would not be the less acceptable from the want of sugar. This being a doctrine wholly repugnant to his creed, which existed only in noisy and ostentatious ceremony, I drew on myself a further severe reproach.

On the 5th at Badpour — seven cosses : a populous village in the Nourpour district. About two cosses to the eastward of Badpour, we crossed at the Rhay Ghaut, or Puttun,* in a ferry-boat, the Byas Gungah, and came into the Jumbo road, which in this quarter has not yet experienced the depredation of the Sicques.

* The name of a ferry in some parts of the Punjab.

ON the 6th, at Gungatau — ten coffes. In the passage of a rivulet near this village, the horse, in suddenly stopping to drink, threw me headlong into the water, where among the rest of my chattels, a bill on Jumbo was thoroughly drenched: nor ~~was~~ this the first injury it had received.

ON the 7th, at Nourpour; the residence of the chief of a district of the same name. This town situate on the top of a hill, which is ascended by stone steps, has the appearance of opulence and industry. Towards the south-east the country is open and of a pleasant aspect, to which a winding stream of fine water gives additional beauty. Mountains that have already made my eyes ach, contract the view to the west and north; but these have their uses; and having experienced an essential one, not to give it a place would be ungenerous. The heat of the sun now growing intense would have been severely felt, had not the wind which came from the north-west received a cool refreshing quality from the snows which on that quarter cover the hills; and had it not been for a like favourable situation, the residence in the Bellaspour camp, the remembrance of which makes me shudder, might have proved fatal to us.

ON a plain adjacent to the town of Nourpour, was encamped a Jumbo kafilah, chiefly the property of Sunassees,* and consigned

* Though this sect, conformably to the tenets of their doctrine, ought to renounce or never engage in the affairs of the world, yet many of its members have become merchants, soldiers, and statesmen.

to the Dehli market. From these people I learned, that the chief of Jumbo was much embarrassed in his finances, from a destructive war he had entered into with the Sicques : that to raise supplies he had levied a general contribution on the inhabitants of the city ; and that his exactions had induced many of the principal merchants to abandon the place. The Sunassees had employed in their service two or three Kashmirians, who are men of an universal occupation, and endowed with unwearied patience and activity in the cause of gain. They told me that I should incur a manifest risk in going to Jumbo, at a time, when the appearance of persons of any property, attracted the notice of government : an information then more alarming, as my business at Jumbo required a personal attendance. Whilst I am writing of Nourpour, it may not be superfluous to mention, that a respectable merchant named Daud Khan, a native of the Punjab, resides in that town. He had lived many years at Jumbo, but having felt the oppression of that government, he has taken refuge in Nourpour, where he enjoys, with a moderate security of property, the benefit of a fine air and a plentiful country ; and should any of our countrymen come this way in the Mahometan character, they may be confidently assured of deriving conveniency, from an acquaintance with Daud Khan.

ON the 8th, halted. On the 9th, at the village of Bunguree—eight coffes. My servant, from a cold and a constitutional weakness in his breast, which he said had long afflicted him, was this day scarcely

able to walk. I am now fearful that the burthen he was loaded with, was too heavy a one, and I am also to accuse myself of not alleviating its weight, by an exercise of those offices of kindness, which the law of humanity, as well as the usages of servitude, especially in the Asiatic world, obliges a master to shew his servant, the more so if he is a good one; and to say that this follower of my fortunes was not a good servant, would be an unworthy attempt to exculpate, at the expence of his character, my frequent neglect. But should I ever be enabled to recompence his worth, the act shall be classed among those of my best deeds. I used to fortify my occasional dissatisfaction at him, by enlarging too rigorously on the petulance of his temper; but I hold the reason no longer valid, nor will it atone for the compunction I feel, when I recall to my mind the many affectionate services which the honest fellow performed in the course of a laborious journey.

THE districts of Nourpour on the north, are bounded by the river Rawee; on the east by the Chambay * country; on the west by some small Hindoo districts, lying at the head of the Punjab. and by the river Byas; and on the south by Huriepour. The revenues of Nourpour are calculated at four lacks of rupees, and it would seem that it enjoys a state of more internal quiet, is less molested by the Sicques, and governed more equitably than any of the adjacent territories.

* A mountainous territory of large extent.

ON the 10th, at Plassee — ten coffes : — a small village in the Bissouly district. About eight miles to the north-west of Bungee, and opposite to the fort of Bissouly, crossed the Rawee,* which is about one hundred and twenty yards in breadth, and very rapid. In the ferry-boat were two Sicques going to the fort, of which, a detachment they belonged to, had taken possession, in consequence of being called in to the assistance of the Bissouly chief. Though this be the invariable result of every connection made with the Sicques, the infatuated mountaineers never fail to seek their aid when engaged in war. A bordering chief had invaded the Bissouly districts, plundered the inhabitants, and burned their villages, before any opposition was made. The Sicques were called in to repel the enemy, and defend the fort of Bissouly ; but after performing the required service, they became pleased with their new situation, and refused to relinquish it.

A QUICK progress through this country, and avoiding the track of the Sicques, were strongly, though unnecessarily, recommended to us. The boatman at the ferry of Bissouly, though a brother Mahometan, made an exorbitant demand of hire, which was considerably lessened by the interference of the Sicque horsemen, who saw the imposition, and had only to make known their will to effect obedience. The journey of this evening, solitary and dreary, gave a wrong bent to every spring of the imagination,

* The Rawee is the Central Punjab river, and runs near the city of Lahore.

which sullenly refused to receive one chearful or pleasing idea. If such did begin to shoot forth, the prospect of a deserted village, a desolate country, immediately destroyed it, and introduced in its stead, those pregnant with the horrors and miseries of war. Great God! that the common evils of life so abundantly heaped on our heads, should not be felt as already too grievous, without the wilful encounter of additional mischiefs! This propensity in the nature of man, indicates a disposition at once destructive of the purposes which he seems designed to execute, and disgraceful to the intellects he so amply possesses.

AN obliging house-keeper in the village of Plassee, accommodated me this evening more agreeably than I could have expected. His little tenement was composed of materials that had resisted the late conflagration of the country, and he had, with his family, resumed the quiet possession of it. Seeing me oppressed and languid, from the effects of a fever, which had seized me on the road, he procured me a bed, and gave me every nourishment which his house afforded.

ON the 11th, at the village of Buddoo — ten coffes; the residence of a petty chief, tributary to Jumbo. This day an annual fair was held at an adjacent hamlet, which being near our road, we mixed with the numerous spectators of the festival. The good humour and mirth accompanying this meeting exhibited a strong contrast to the scene of yesterday, and described, in lively colours, the various bounties which flow from peace. Among the diversions

sions of the day, I observed the wheel with boxes suspended from its rim, of common use in the southern parts of India, for whirling round those who are disposed to make such aerial circuits. More than once have I taken my seat in one of those whirligigs, and can assure you, that the entertainment, though not of a sober kind, has its pleasures; and what is more than you can say of many a pleasure, it sets you down where it took you up. My servant did not arrive this evening, and from having hitherto wholly relied on his services, I sustained a great inconveniency. But a Kashmirian family at Buddo, on the score of an acquaintance with my companion, in a certain degree relieved it, by giving us a friendly reception, and a slender supper.

ON the 12th at Mancote — eight coffes. A chief depending on Jumbo resided at this village, which stands on an eminence partially skirted by a small river. Here my troubles branched out anew, and though not deserving a rank in the list of misfortunes, involved me in various difficulties. My Kashmirian associate having by mistake proceeded beyond our place of rendezvous, there was no one to prepare my victuals, or to take care of the horse. Though the Hindoos hold in abomination the performance of any menial office for strangers, yet the shop-keeper at Mancote, from whom I had purchased the necessaries of the day, afforded me great assistance. He gave me house-room, a bed, and also some of his household utensils, for holding the horse's corn, and my own provision. From an association with those who had obviated
my

my various wants, and had even rendered the journey a pleasant one, I was at once deprived of all help. In the first place, I cleaned and fed my horse, nor did he deserve less at my hands; for he was a good-tempered, sure-footed, active animal. Had he not indeed been thus qualified, he could not have supported such fatigue, or have clambered over the steep and rocky mountains that had hitherto stood in his way. After this care, it was necessary to remedy the state of my own wants, which became urgent and clamorous, for I had not eaten any thing that day.

BEING told that a mendicant Seid * of eminent sanctity resided in the upper part of the town, I presented myself to him, told my story, and earnestly entreated his aid. I had imagined that the man who lived on public benevolence, whose welfare in the world was promoted by a common exercise of humanity, would have cheerfully come forward to my succour, especially as the request had no tendency to touch his property. But I reckoned without my host. Never did mitred priest in all the plenitude of his power, rolling amidst the pluralities of benefice, regard a meagre curate with a deeper contempt of eye, than did this haughty descendant of Mahomet receive my supplication. Simply setting forth the loss of my servant, and the inability to supply his place, I requested that he would direct his people to prepare for me a meal, the materials of which were all in readiness. This language

* The descendants of Mahomet are so denominated.

had

had no effect on the Seid, who confiding, I suppose, wholly in the efficacy of faith, had exploded from his creed the doctrine of good works: or, considering perhaps the trade of begging to be a monopoly of his order, he wished to expel and discourage all interlopers. After warmly expatiating on the difficulties that surrounded me, throwing in also some strictures on his conduct, he grumbled an assent, but with an express proviso that I should produce fire-wood. I could as easily have brought him a bulse of diamonds as a stick, for it was then dark, and indeed hunger and fatigue had made me incapable of exertion. Turning from him with indignation, I loudly reprobated his violation of what even the rudest Mahometans hold sacred, the rights of hospitality; a ready performance of which, he ought to know, was earnestly enjoined, and that the Divine vengeance was peculiarly denounced against all who transgress its law. This exclamation, delivered with heat, roused the attention of his adherents, one of whom desiring me to be pacified, proposed to adjust the embarrassment. He carried me to the house of a singing girl, who, on learning the story of my wants, tucked up her garment with a smiling alacrity, and commenced the business of relieving them without delay. It would have made your heart glad to have seen this honest girl baking my bread and boiling my peas, she did it with so good a will; frequently observing, that I had conferred an honour upon her, and that the present service, was but a small return for the many favours she had received from those of my class. Will not you judge the declaration

tion of her refusing all donation, an Eastern hyperbole? Yet I affirm to you that it is a genuine story, and were Mancote at no further distance from Lucknow, than Shieck Seray,* you might procure, from this honest girl, a testimony of its truth. •

ON the 13th I arrived at Mansir — eight coffes. The country now became more open, and the vallies better cultivated than any I have seen to the westward of Bissouly. The journey this day was pleasant, and what in my proceeding was extraordinary, I did not deviate from the road, though alone. In passing near an encampment of beggars, (a merry troop they were) they desired me to alight and take some refreshment : the invitation was thankfully accepted, and I partook of a coarse, but cordial meal, which was served up with frequent professions of welcome. Mansir is composed of a few houses, standing on the margin of a beautiful sheet of water, which is abundantly supplied with fish ; but being held a sacred or royal property, they live unmolested. The lands of Mansir were appropriated, by a former chief of Jumbo, to the maintenance of certain Byraghees,* who in this delicious spot seem to enjoy every pleasure which men in India can taste. But here I am checked and called upon to crave your pardon, for these solitary sectaries have precluded women from their society ; and to say that any portion of life, however replete with other gratifica-

• This place is about six miles distant from Lucknow.

† A religious tribe of Hindoos who profess celibacy.

tions,

tions, can yield a genuine pleasure without women, is to suppose that our day could be chearful without the light of the fun. At this village the wife of a Mahometan oilman conducted my culinary business, but in a manner far different from that of my late musical friend: she took most unwarrantable emoluments out of an ill-dressed supper; and her cat, which seemed to have a congenial temper, made an attack on my baggage at night, and carried off the little stock of provisions which I had prepared for the next day's breakfast.

LEST my arrival at Jumbo should excite enquiry, which from the disposition of the chief might not be favourable, I denominated myself an officer in the Jumbo service, travelling from the army, which was then in the field, to the city. The road this day leading in a south-west * direction, was the most dreary one I had ever seen, and became more so from the want of a companion. On approaching so large a town as Jumbo, I expected to have seen a moderately populous country; but the aspect was altogether the reverse. Many miles of the road lay through a defile of sand, the sides of which consist of lofty rocks, and nearly perpendicular. The predicament in which I then stood gave a gloomy cast to my thoughts, which naturally adverted to that long established position, of "man being a sociable animal;" the truth of which few

* The southern inclination of this day, was caused, I apprehend, from the formation of some branch of the mountains.

are more convinced of than myself. I did not dwell on the various uses inherent in the principles of society, nor on the grander benefits so extensively diffused by general compact ; but was contented with viewing the lesser conveniencies which it imparts, with reflecting on the casual, but grateful enjoyments which men receive from the most fluctuating intercourse. What harmony, what good humour, are often seen circulating in a sweetmeat shop, the coffee house of India ! where all subjects, except that of the ladies, are treated with freedom : not so eloquently perhaps, nor with such refinement of language, as among the politicians of an European capital, yet with equal fervour and strength of voice. The favourite topic is war ; there you may hear of exploits performed by a single arm, at the recital of which even Secunder * would have grown pale, and Ruftum † himself trembled. The pleasure of communication, by which they become the heroes of their own tale, is a keen spur to the various class of adventurers, and perhaps fewer men would encounter services of hazard, were not a pleasure expected from their recital.

On the side of the road, to my great joy, I at length discovered a family sitting on a narrow green spot, where availing themselves of the singular situation, they were grazing their cattle. I sat myself down without ceremony, and was presented with what I

* The Asiatic name of Alexander the Great.

† A hero celebrated in the ancient legends of Persia.

have

have often recollected with pleasure, for the heat of the day had made me very thirsty), a cup of butter-milk. The father told me that the oppressions of his landlord had forced him to quit his house, and he was then in quest of some securer residence. On your side of India, acts are doubtless committed that tend to fully the honour and impress an odium on the character of our nation; but they are, believe me, faint specks when compared with the deeds of injustice and rapacity practised in other Asiatic countries. One of the family suffered much pain from a lacerated finger, and as all persons of my colour are in India denominated surgeons, wizards, and artillery-men, I was called upon to administer help, which I did gratis to their great satisfaction.

TOWARDS the evening, I arrived at the lower town of Jumbo, where seeing a retired house at which I intended to have sought admission, I discovered a person who, about a month before, travelled for some days in the same party with me; but being employed on some service of dispatch, he had left it. This man being now the servant of a Kashmirian at Jumbo, for whom I had brought a letter of introduction, and whose name I used to mention in the course of the journey, destroyed my scheme of privacy. He ran off as soon as he had distinctly seen me, and speedily returned with his master, who would not rest satisfied until he had lodged me in his house, though we were obliged to proceed thither in the midst of a heavy rain: it would be a tedious and flat story, to detail the multiplied modes of the respect of this Kashmirian for

H h 2

my

my person, which he had never before seen ; or to enumerate his painful, yet incessant attentions. Whatever partiality I might entertain for my own merits, I was necessarily impelled to see that his assiduity proceeded from a belief of the opulence, and the wish of transacting the commercial business of his guest. After he had gone through the long routine of my extraordinary qualities and accomplishments, of whose excellency he had been advised by his correspondent at Lucknow, he congratulated my singular good fortune in having met him so early on my arrival ; for except himself, I should not have found an honest man in Jumbo. Such, my friend, is the effervescence of Oriental speech, which if exposed to the colder air of the north, would subside into that strain of language spoken every day in Change Alley and Cheapside. It was best not to undeceive my Kashmirian, as the character of a merchant is more respected here than any other, and under which the least suspicion is entertained of a stranger. On presenting my bill to the banker at Jumbo, I found, from its having been twice drenched in water, that the folds adhered together as firmly as if they had been pasted. The banker,* with much good nature, soaking the paper in water, and opening the folds with care, was enabled to read, though with difficulty, the contents. Had he been disposed to protract the payment, there was sufficient cause, but holding out no demur, he at once said the bill was a good one, kindly observing also, that as

* His name is Juala Naut, the nephew of Kashmiry Mull, at Benares.

my

my journey had been long and fatiguing, I should have brought an order for a larger sum.

JUMBO is situated on the side of a hill, and contains two distinct divisions, which are termed the upper and the lower towns. The bottom of the hill is washed by the river Rawee,* about forty or fifty yards broad, and fordable at most seasons of the year. Many water-mills stand on its banks for grinding corn, which are constructed in a neater manner than any I have seen in India, and were introduced by the Kashmirians, who have greatly improved as well as enriched this town. The short stay at Jumbo prevented me from procuring much satisfactory information of its history, or the causes which have produced its important commerce, riches, and luxury: for Jumbo, even in its decayed state, is a mart of the first note in this quarter of the country. Perhaps the collection of such materials would not have compensated the labour of perusal, or afforded you that instruction which I ever wish to be the effect of my communications:—but such as I have procured, shall be genuinely laid before you.

PREVIOUSLY to Nadir Shah's invasion of India, the common road from Dehli to Kashmire, lay through Sirhend, Lahore, and Heerpour, the pass of which is fully described by Mr. Bernier, under the name of Bember. Since the inroad of the Persians, Afghans, and the Mahrattas, but especially since the period of the

* It falls into the Chinnaun.

Since conquests, that track has been rendered unsafe to merchants, and is now disused. This obstruction diverted the Kashmirian trade into the channel of Jumbo, which being shut up from the Punjab by a strong chain of mountains, difficult of access to cavalry, it has been preferred to the Lahore road, though the journey is tedious, and the expenses of merchandize increased.

RUNZEID DEVE, the father of the present chief of Jumbo, who deservedly acquired the character of a just and wise ruler, largely contributed to the wealth and importance of Jumbo. Perceiving the benefits which would arise from the residence of Mahometan merchants, he held out to them many encouragements, and observed towards them a disinterested and an honourable conduct. Negative virtues only are expected from an Asiatic despot, and under such a sanction his subjects might deem themselves fortunate; but the chief of Jumbo went farther than the forbearance of injuries; he avowedly protected and indulged his people, particularly the Mahometans, to whom he allotted a certain quarter of the town, which was thence denominated Moghulpour; and that no reserve might appear in his treatment of them, a mosque was erected in the new colony; a liberality of disposition the more conspicuous, and conferring the greater honour on his memory, as it is the only instance of the like toleration in this part of India, and as the Kashmirians who chiefly composed his Mahometan subjects, have been, since their conversion, rigorous persecutors of the Hindoos. He was so desirous also of acquiring their confidence and esteem, that

that when he has been riding through their quarter during the time of prayer, he never failed to stop his horse until the priest had concluded his ritual exclamations. The Hindoos once complained to this chief, that the public wells of the town were defiled by the vessels of the Mahometans, and desired that they might be restricted to the water of the river; but he abruptly dismissed the complaint, saying, that water was a pure element, designed for the general use of mankind, and could not be polluted by the touch of any class of people. An administration so munificent and judicious, at the same time that it enforced the respect of his own subjects, made Jumbo a place of extensive commercial resort, where all descriptions of men experienced, in their persons and property, a full security.

THE articles of merchandize constituting the trade of Jumbo, and Kashmire, are transported by men, usually Kashmirians, whose burthens are heavy, two of them making the load of a strong mule, and the hire is fixed at the rate of four rupees for each carrier. The shauls, when exported from Kashmire, are packed in an oblong bale, containing a certain weight or quantity, which in the language of the country is termed a *biddery*, the outward covering of which is a buffalo or ox's hide, strongly sewed with leather thongs. As these packages are supposed to amount, with little variation, to a value long since ascertained, they are seldom opened until conveyed to the destined market. A Kashmirian porter carries a load as a soldier does his knap-sack, and when dis-

posed

posed to rest, he places under it a stick in the form of a crutch which supports the load and assists him also in walking. Two causes are assigned for employing men only in this service: an agreement, it is said arising from a mutual jealousy, has been made between the chiefs bordering on either side of the river Chinnaun,* that no fixed bridge shall be constructed, or any boat stationed on that stream. The other cause ascribed, which seems to be more forcible, is the stupendous height and steepness of the intervening mountains, which renders the passages dangerous, if not wholly impracticable, to either a horse or mule.

It appears that Jumbo continued to increase its power and commerce until the year 1770, the period of Runzeid Deve's death, when one of his sons, the present chief, contrary to the intention and express will of his father, seized on the government, put to death one of his brothers, the intended successor, and imprisoned another; who having made his escape sought the protection of the Sicques. Pleased in having obtained so favourable a pretext for entering Jumbo, which they attempted in vain during the administration of Runzeid Deve, the Sicques promised to espouse the fugitive's cause with vigour. A small sum had been annually exacted by them from Jumbo, but in a much less proportion than what was levied in the adjacent territories. The Sicques, indeed, aware of the respectable state of the Jumbo force, and the ability

* The fourth Punjab river from the eastward.

of

of the chief, were contented with the name of tribute. The most valuable division of the Jumbo districts, lay in the plain country, forming part of the northern Punjab; which, under pretence of affording assistance to the person who lately sought their protection, a body of Sicques have laid waste. They are now prosecuting a vigorous war against the present chief, who through the defection of many of his people, driven by oppressions to the party of his brother, became unable to make any effectual stand; and that his ill fortune might be complete, he called into his aid, a party of Sicque mercenaries, commanded by Mhah Sing, a powerful officer in that quarter, who has firmly established his authority at Jumbo, and has erected a fort at the south entrance of the principal pass leading into the Punjab. For defraying the expence incurred by the Sicque troops, the Jumbo chief has made rigorous demands on the native inhabitants of the city, and is now throwing an eye on the foreign merchants; who, dreading his disposition and necessities, have taken a general alarm. It was with much pleasure I saw the person on whom my bill was drawn, a man of a fair and honourable character, enjoying, amidst these disorders, a moderate security. He seemed to have procured the favour of Mhah Sing, who, with other officers of the party, supported him against the designs of the Rajah. The person entrusted with the government of the town of Jumbo, during the absence of the chief then in the field, was so exact a counterpart of his master

in the system of oppression, that I was advised to a speedy departure, lest I should fall under an inspection. Though much fatigued by an harassing journey, and the sale of my horse, with other necessary concerns, was to be adjusted, such was the ascendancy of my fears, that on the 16th of the month, I was ready to proceed.

IN laying before you these scattered pieces of intelligence, I must not forget to notice, that the courtezans and female dancers of the Punjab and Kashmire, or rather a mixed breed of both these countries, are beautiful women, and are held in great estimation through all the northern parts of India: the merchants established at Jumbo, often become so fondly attached to a dancing girl, that, neglecting their occupation, they have been known to dissipate, at her will, the whole of their property; and I have seen some of them reduced to a subsistence on charity; for these girls, in the manner of their profession, are profuse and rapacious.

My Kashmirian host, who continued to oppress me with kindness, had a brother living in the same house, who was so much afflicted with the rheumatism, that he could not stir out of his room. Possessing much useful information, with a pleasant sociable temper, I was glad to be admitted to his conversation, which equally amused me, and contributed to a knowledge of this quarter of India. He gave me also some directions for my conduct in Kashmire, which were delivered with an air of candour, and so
apparently

apparently void of design, that I should have been ridiculously sceptical in not giving them credit. The day before I left Jumbo, he called me into his room, and in very affectionate language, said, " My friend, you are now about visiting a country, whose inhabitants are of a character different from any you have hitherto seen, and it behoves you to be wary and diligent, for they are a subtle and keen people. You must particularly be on your guard against my brother, who is now in that country, and will probably endeavour to borrow some of your money. Steadily withstand his solicitations, nor lend him a rupee ; for if you do, the money is lost. Make your disbursements only on the delivery of the goods, and, however urgent he is, do not make any advance." He displayed, I thought, a singular trait of honesty in giving an advice wholly divested of a tendency to promote the interests of his family, at the expence of fair dealing.

THOUGH the districts of Buddoo and Chinanah * do not at this day form immediate appendages of Jumbo, they are so intimately dependent on its policy, that to avoid prolixity, I will throw their limits into one description. This united territory is bounded on the north by the river Chinaun, which divides it from Kihhtewer ; on the east by independent Hindoo districts ; on the south by Biffouly ; and on the west by the Punjab. It would be hazarding too hasty an assertion to offer any specific

* This district lies to the westward of Jumbo.

calculation of the Jumbo revenue, as the larger moiety is produced by import and export duties, which are now in a fluctuating state, and have been diminishing since the accession of the present chief; but the current information of the country, states the ordinary receipt at five lacks of rupees, exclusive of the produce of Buddoo and Chinanah.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your's, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

DEAR SIR,

THE frequent introduction of the Sicques to your notice, will have naturally excited a desire to examine the history of this new and extraordinary people, who within a period of twenty years, have conquered a tract of country, extending in certain directions from the Ganges to the Indus. My knowledge of the subject does not permit me to deduce, on substantial authority, their history from the period in which Nanock their first institutor and law-giver lived, or mark with an order of dates the progress which this people have made, and the varying gradations of their power, until their attainment of their present state of national importance. You who are apprized of the futility of the documents which compose the general texture of Eastern record,*
 who

* Neither the genius of the people nor the form of their government is favourable to the growth of History, which is rarely seen to flourish on despotic ground. The actions of Asiatic princes are usually recorded by their own scribes; and we know that a large portion of the annals of India was manufactured under imperial inspection. It is, therefore, scarcely within the verge of probability, that a writer, attracted by so powerful an influence, would dared to have thrown the piercing light of History on the

who have witnessed the irresistible tendency of an Asiatic mind to fiction, and the produce of its ductile fancy, will grant me an indulgent scope, and will, I trust, believe, that though the body of the history be not complete, such parts only will be noticed, as are either founded on received tradition, or on those legends which have the least exceptionable claims to credit.

UNDER shelter of this preliminary, I will proceed to inform you that Nanock,* the founder of the Sicque nation, was born in the year of the Christian æra, 1469, during the reign of Sultan Beloul,† at the village of Tulwundy,‡ about sixty miles to the westward of Lahore. Nanock appears to have possessed qualities happily adapted to effect the institution of a new system of religion. He was inflexibly just; he enjoyed from nature a commanding

the reigning monarch, or even to have examined with freedom the actions of his ancestors, who have, for more than two hundred years, maintained an unbroken succession of the Empire of Hindostan. Oriental speech, pregnant with figure, and capable of expressing the wildest flights of fancy, disdains the limits of History. It is better fitted to modulate poetic strains, and describe the wide region of romance; where it can roam without restraint, and happily without the power of committing extensive injuries.

* He was of the *Chittery* or second cast of Hindoos, and according to a secret belief of the Sicques, a species of secondary incarnation of the Supreme Deity.

† A Patan king of Dehli, who reigned previous to Baber's conquest of Hindostan.

‡ This village is now known by the name of Rhaypour. The terms given by the Sicques to their places of worship, are *Sungbut*, *Durmsallah*, and *Dairah*, words signifying, in the Hinduee, an assembly of the people, a charitable or pious foundation, and a house. This last appellation seems to be applied in an eminent sense, as "the house." The Sicques, in commemoration of the place of Nanock's birth, have erected an edifice at Tulwundy, where a grand festival is annually celebrated.

elocution,

eloquence, and was endowed with a calm passive fortitude, which successfully supported him through the long course of a dangerous occupation. The tenets of Nanock forbid the worship of images, and ordain that the places of public prayer shall be of plain construction, and devoid of every exhibition of figure. A book, entitled the *Grunth*, which contains the civil and religious institutes of Nanock, is the only typical object which the Sicques have admitted into their places of worship. Instead of the intermediation of subordinate deities, they are directed to address their prayer to one God, who, without the aid of any delegate, is to be considered the unassociated ruler of the universe.* Though many essential differences exist between the religious code of the Hindoos and that of the Sicques, a large space of their ground-work exhibits strong features of similarity. The article indeed of the admission of proselytes amongst the Sicques, has caused an essential deviation from the Hindoo system, and apparently levelled those barriers which were constructed by Brimha, for the arrangement of the different ranks and professions of his people. Yet this indiscriminate admission, by the qualifications which have been adopted, do not widely infringe on the customs and prejudices of those Hindoos

* When it is noticed that the worship of the Hindoos is loaded with a mass of puerile ceremony, and oftentimes conducted with a ridiculous grimace, it will not seem surprizing that a creed, founded on principles calculated to promote the establishment of a simple uniform religion, and promulgated by a man of distinguished tribe and exemplary manners, should draw to it proselytes even in the bigotted regions of India.

who

who have embraced the faith of the Sicques. They still preserve the distinctions which originally marked their sects, and perform many of the ancient ceremonies of their nation. They form matrimonial connections only in their own tribes, and adhere implicitly to the rules prescribed by the Hindoo law, in the choice and preparation of their food. The only aliment used in common, by the Sicques at this day, is the *purfaud*,* or sacred bread, from the participation of which no tribe or class of their people is excluded.

FEW events of historical importance are related of Nanock, the founder of this sect, who possessing neither territory nor wealth, nor aided by the force of arms, preached his doctrine in peace, and manifested, in the countries which he visited, an unaffected simplicity of manners. He journeyed through most of the kingdoms in India, from whence, according to the tradition of the Sicques, he went into Persia and Arabia. In his travels, which with short intervals continued for the space of fifteen years, he was attended by a Mahometan musician, named Murdana, who became his convert, and ever remained faithfully attached to his person. It is said that in one of the expeditions of Baber † into

* The *purfaud* is said to be a composition of flour, butter, and certain spices; this bread after being consecrated by the Bramins, is also used by some sects of Hindoos in the ceremony of administering an oath, particularly in that quarter of the Orissa province, contiguous to the temple of Juggud Nautt.

† Baber defeated the Patan King of Hindostan, in A. D. 1526.

India,

India, Nanock having been apprehended by some of the soldiers, was brought before that prince, who informed of the sanctity of his character, treated him with respect and indulgence. As no records of the Moghul Empire bear a testimony of the existence of this sect during the period in which Nanock lived, it cannot be supposed that his converts were numerous or powerful. Nanock, according to the Sicque records, died in the month of August, A. D. 1539, aged seventy years, at Dayrah, a village on the banks of the Rawee, about forty miles to the northward of Lahore, where a vast concourse of people annually assemble, to perform certain ceremonies in commemoration of the day of his decease. Nanock, though he had two sons, devolved the charge of the mission to his favourite disciple Anghut,* a Hindoo of the Chittery tribe, to whom he also entrusted the publication † of the laws and precepts of his doctrine. Anghut, who seems to have passed his time in retirement, died about the year 1542, at the town of Khadour,‡ the place of his nativity. He was succeeded by Ammerdass, a native of the Lahore district, who propagated the new doctrine without molestation, and died in the year 1574, at the village of

* Nanock changed the original name of his successor, which was Lina.

† The religious and historical writings of the Sicques, are written in a character called the *Gooroo Mhookke*, or the language of the *Gooroos*, or priests. This letter, which is said to have been invented by Nanock, differs from the various characters in use among the Hindoos.

‡ A village in the Punjab, about forty miles to the eastward of Lahore.

Govindual* Ramdass,† who had espoused the daughter of the last preceptor of the Sicques, was then chosen the representative of their sect. This priest lived in the reign of Acbar, and, according to the tradition of the Sicques, experienced some marks of that emperor's favour. Retiring in the latter part of his life to a small district‡ in the vicinity of Lahore, which Acbar had granted to him, he founded the town of Ramdasspouir. He repaired also and ornamented a reservoir of water, which had in ancient times been dedicated at that place by the Hindoos to their God *Ram*, and to which he now gave the name of *Amrut Sir*.§ Ramdass made a compilation of the history and precepts of his predecessors, and annexing his own commentaries, ordained that his disciples should form the principles of their faith on the doctrine set forth in the joint collection. Ramdass died at the town he had founded about the year 1581, and was succeeded by his son Arjun, who having incurred the displeasure of a Hindoo || favoured by Jehanguir, was committed by that prince to the persecution of his enemy; and his death, which happened in the year 1606, at Lahore, was caused it is said by the rigour of confine-

* Situate on the Byas, the second Punjab river from the eastward.

† This Gooroo was born in the city of Lahore.

‡ At the distance of twenty four miles from Lahore.

§ *Amrut*, according to the mythology of the Hindoos, is a water said to bestow immortality on those who drink it; and *Sir*, in certain dialects of the Hindoos, signifies a piece of water.

|| Named Chaundoo.

ment.

ment. The succession devolved on Hurrgovind, his only son, who actuated by revenge for the cruelties exercised on his father, and strongly supported by the enthusiastic valour of his adherents, he dragged the Hindoo from his house, though within the walls of Lahore, and put him to death. Fearing the effects of the emperor's displeasure, Hurrgovind fled to Hurtarpour, a village founded by his father, where he collected an armed body for the defence of his person, and according to the records of the nation, defeated a force that Jehanguir had sent to punish his rebellion. But the vein of incongruous story which runs through the achievements of this militant priest, precludes the derivation of any extensive historical use. The only passage deserving a serious notice, represents, that an officer of Jehanguir, named Mahobut Khan, effected the Sicque's submission to the emperor, who ordered him to be imprisoned in the fort of Gualior: but that after a short confinement, he was, at the intercession of Mahobut Khan, set at liberty. It is not seen that Hurrgovind disturbed the peace of the Moghul government at a future period, but passing his days in a reclusé manner, he died about the year 1644, at Khyrtpour, a village in the Punjab. The Sicques conferred the office of priesthood on Harray, the grandson of Hurrgovind, though four of their late preceptor's sons were alive. No other mention is made of Harray, than that he died in the year 1661 at Khyrtpour. At his death, a violent contest arose for the succession, which was claimed by the respective adherents of his two sons,

Ramroy and Hurkishen, then in infancy; but not being enabled to adjust their claims at home, they appealed to the courts of law at Dehli, where the opponents appeared, and set forth their several pretensions. The cause it is said terminated in a permission being granted to the Sicques to nominate their own priest; when, adjusting the contest, they elected Hurkishen, who died at Dehli in 1664, a short time after his investiture.

HURKISHEN was succeeded by Taigh Bhahauder, his uncle, who appears to have been persecuted with inveterate animosity by the adherents of Ramroy, who, supported by some persons of influence at the court of Aurungzebe, an order was obtained for the imprisonment of the new priest. Taigh Bhahauder, after remaining in confinement at Dehli for the space of two years, was released at the intreaty of Jay Sing, the powerful chief of Jaynaghur, who was at that time proceeding to Bengal on the service of government. The Sicque accompanied his patron to Bengal, whence he returned to the city of Patna, which became his usual place of abode. The records of the Sicques say that Ramroy still maintained a claim to the priesthood, and that after a long series of virulent persecution, he accomplished the destruction of Taigh Bhahauder, who was conveyed to Dehli by an order of Court, and in the year 1675, publicly put to death. The formal execution of a person, against whom, the Sicques say, no criminal charge was exhibited, is so repugnant to the character and the actions of Aurungzebe, that we are involuntarily led to charge the Sicques of
of

of a wilful misrepresentation of facts, injurious to the memory of the prince, and extravagantly partial to the cause of their priest. No document for the elucidation of this passage appearing in any of the memoirs of Hindostan that have reached my knowledge, I am prevented from discovering the quality of the crime which subjected Taigh Bhahauder to capital punishment.

GOVIND SING, then a youth, and the only son of Taigh Bhahauder, was called to the succession by the largest portion of the Sicque's disciples: but the intelligence of his father's death, and dread of a like fate, had induced him to fly from Patna, whence he retired after a series of various adventures into the territory of Siringnaghur. Though Govind Sing could not then have reached his fifteenth year, he evinced many marks of a haughty and turbulent spirit, which was conspicuously shewn in his conduct to the Siringnaghur chief. On pretence of an insult being offered, he collected his party, which amounted it is said to four or five thousand men, and defeated a body of the Siringnaghur troops; but being worsted in some future action, or, according to the authority of the Sicque, obliged by an order of the emperor to leave the country of Siringnaghur, he proceeded with his adherents to the Punjab, where he was hospitably * received by a marauding Hindoo chief of that quarter. Endowed with an

* The dependencies of Mackaval, through which the river Sutledge runs, were given by this Hindoo to Govind Sing, where he founded certain villages.

active

active and daring temper, the Sicque assisted his new associate in various expeditions against the bordering landholders, and often in opposing the forces of government. The predatory conduct of Govind Sing rendering him obnoxious to the governor of Sirhend, he was attacked and driven from his place of residence. Being afterwards discovered amongst the hills in the northern parts of the Sirhend districts, he was so vigorously pressed by the imperial troops, that abandoning his family and effects, he was compelled to save himself by speedy flight. Vizier Khan, the governor of Sirhend, sullied the reputation he had acquired in this service, by putting to death, in cold blood, the two younger sons of Govind Sing. A severe vengeance was taken for this act at a future period by the Sicques, who giving a loose to savage and indiscriminate cruelty, massacred the Mahometans, of every age and sex, that fell into their hands. After his late disaster, Govind Sing found a secure retreat in the Lacky Jungles,* which its natural defence, a scarcity of water, and the valour of its inhabitants,† had rendered at that day impregnable. But when the resentment of government abated, he returned without molestation to his former residence in the Punjab. The Sicques say, he even received marks of favour from Bhahauder Shah, who being apprised of his military abilities, gave him a charge in the army which

* A woody country, situate in the northern part of the Punjab, and famous for a breed of excellent horses, called the Jungle Tazec.

† The Jatts.

marched

marched into the Decan to oppose the rebellion of Rambuchsh.* Govind Sing was assassinated during this expedition by a Patan soldier, and he died of his wounds in 1708, at the town of Nandere,† without leaving any male issue; and a tradition delivered to the Sicques, limiting their priests to the number of ten, induced them to appoint no successor to Govind Sing. A Sicque disciple, named Bunda, who had attended Govind Sing to the Decan, came, after the death of his chief, into the Punjab; where, claiming a merit from his late connection, he raised a small force, and in various desultory enterprises, established the character of a brave but cruel soldier. His successes at length drew to his standard the whole body of the Sicque nation, which had now widely deviated from the precepts of their founder. A confidence in their strength, rendered presumptuous by the absence of the emperor, had made them rapacious and daring, and the late persecutions, cruel and enthusiastic. Bunda, after dispersing the parties of the lesser Mahometan chiefs, attacked the forces of Vizier Khan, the governor of Sirhend, who fell in an action that was fought with an obstinate valour, but ended in the total defeat of the imperial troops. The Sicques expressed an extraordinary joy at this victory, as it enabled them to satiate their revenge for the death of the sons of Govind Sing. The wife of Vizier Khan, with his children, and a

* A brother of Bhauder Shah.

† Nandere is situate near the banks of the Godavery, about 100 miles to the north-east of Hyderabad.

vaft

vast multitude of the inhabitants of Sirhend were destroyed with every species of wild fury. The mosques were overthrown or polluted, and the dead, torn out of their graves, were exposed to the beasts of prey. A party of Sicques had at the same time penetrated the greater Duab, and seized on the town and certain districts of Saharanpour,* where they slaughtered the inhabitants, or forcibly made them converts to the new faith. Bunda, who had rapidly acquired the possession of an extensive territory, was now deserted by his good fortune. He had crossed the river Sutledge with an intention of carrying his conquests to the westward, but being encountered by Shems Khan, an imperial officer who commanded in that quarter, he was repulsed with a great loss. The Sicque's troops employed in the Duab expedition, had even approached the vicinity of Dehli, but they were defeated by the forces of the empire, and driven back to the districts which still remained subject to Bunda.

SUCH was the situation of the Sicques when Bhahauder Shah finished the Decan campaign, and returned in the year 1710 to Hindostan. Alarmed at the progress, and irritated at the cruelties they had exercised, he marched towards their stations with a determination to crush the sect, and revenge the injuries that had been inflicted on the Mahometan religion. Sultan Rouli Khan, one of his principal officers, advanced with a division of the army,

† For its situation, see Rennell's map.

and

and encountering the Sicques on the plains of Sirhend, put them to flight after a bloody conflict; and a party of the fugitives who had taken refuge with Bunda, in a strong post, were made prisoners, though not before their chief had escaped. The Sicques who survived this disaster, though compelled to disperse, and their chief to wander about the country in disguise, were not conquered in the reign of Bhahauder Shah. The death * of this prince impeded the success of an active pursuit which had been made after the vanquished sectaries, on whose lives a price was set in every part of the empire. Conformably to the order of the last priest, the disciples of Nanock had permitted the growth of the hair of the head and beard. An edict was therefore issued, compelling the Hindoos of every tribe to cut off their hair.

JEHANDAR SHAH,† who succeeded to the empire, made a feeble effort to accomplish the extirpation of the Sicques, but his short reign being involved in an alternate series of debauchery, and tumultuous defence of his country against the invasion of Furruck Sir, this people were encouraged to emerge from their concealment, and again take up the sword. In the reign of Furruck Sir,‡ the Sicques, who had then collected a large force,§ were vigorously attacked by Abdul Sumet Khan, the governor of Lahore, who

* Bhahauder Shah died about the year 1712.

† This Emperor reigned only a few months.

‡ Furruck Sir's reign continued from 1712-3 to 1719.

§ The Sicque forces amounted, it is said, to 20,000 cavalry.

gave them battle near the fort of Loghur,* and gained a decisive victory. Those who escaped took shelter with Bunda in Loghur, but being closely invested, and reduced to extreme distress from hunger, they surrendered at discretion.† The captives were conveyed in triumph to Dehli, where being exhibited in an ignominious manner to the inhabitants of the city, they met a deserved fate, for their savage and often unprovoked cruelties. Yet they met it with an undaunted firmness, and died amidst the wondering praise of the populace.

HAVING thus briefly related the origin of the Sicques,‡ with a chronological notice of their ten priests, and the issue of Bunda's attempt to establish an independent dominion, I will interrupt the historical narrative at this period, by a summary description of certain domestic ordinances established by Nanock and his successors. The person desirous of becoming a member of the Sicque doctrine, is conducted into the presence of five or more of their people, of any class or profession, assembled for the occasion, when one of them pours into the hollow of his hand a little water, which, being touched by the toe of each of the Sicques, the proselyte swallows,

* Situate about one hundred miles to the north-west of Lahore.

† This event happened in 1714.

‡ The Sicques affix to their proper name the word *Sing*, which signifying a lion in the Sanscrit language, the appellation of *Sing* belongs properly to the military order. The civil body of the people, artizans, merchants, and all the lower classes, being denominated *Sicques*, or disciples.

previously

previously repeating the words "*Wab * gooroojee ka khalfab, wab gooroojee-ka futtab.*" After the performance of this obligation, a cup filled with sherbet is introduced, out of which he drinks five times, and repeats at intervals the afore-mentioned ejaculation. At the conclusion of this ceremony, the convert is instructed in the use of a prayer of great length, in which the religious, moral, and political duties of a Sicque are set forth, and the observance of them enjoined.

THE first part of the initiation observed in admitting a proselyte, denotes the equality of the followers of Nanock, and is designed to destroy that fabric of ceremony and form, which the Hindoos are now taught to consider as the essential principle of their religion: but the purpose of the Sicque priests in elevating the new religion on this simple base, has been but partially executed. The military Sicques permit the hair of the head and beard to grow long; they usually fix an iron bracelet on the left hand, and they are prohibited the use of tobacco. These regulations, which were probably instituted by their law-givers to distinguish them from other nations, are now become duties of a primary class, and seem

* These words, composed of the Arabic and Hindoo languages, convey a benediction on the government of the Sicques, and on the memory of their priests. The Sicques salute each other by the expression *Wab Geeroo*, without any inclination of the body, or motion of the hand. The government at large, and their armies, are denominated *Khalsa* and *Khalsajee*.

almost to form the essence of their creed.* By a law of Nanock, widows are expressly forbidden to destroy themselves at the death of their husbands, and are permitted to renew the ceremonies of marriage. But so strong is yet the adherence of the Sicques who have been converted from the Hindoo tribes, to the ancient customs of their country, that many of their women are seen ascending the funeral pile; nor are they ever induced to enter a second time into the connubial state. The Sicques, after the manner of the Hindoos, bury their dead; and they oblige the Mahometan converts to adopt the like usage. They hold a lamentation for the death of any person criminal, and equally unjust as to be afflicted with grief at the payment of an equitable debt, or the surrender of a trust. Their belief of a future state seems to correspond in most of its parts with the metempsychosis of the Hindoos; and as a sketch of that system has been already given, any further explanation of it is unnecessary.

THE Sicque nation is composed of two distinct sects, or orders

* This would appear to be an effect naturally produced in the minds of the bulk of mankind, who eagerly fix their attention and their affections on exterior objects; which having been taught to behold, with sentiments of respect and religious enthusiasm they become so strongly attached to them, that a portion of temporal welfare, with the hope of future happiness, seems among many nations to depend on a rigorous observance of form. A conspicuous example of this disposition was evinced in the rage which the Russians manifested on being obliged by Peter to shave their beards. The prince perhaps encountered less danger and difficulty in giving a new form and new manners to the empire, than in accomplishing that change in the persons of his subjects.

of

of people; those who compose the most ancient one are denominated *Khualasab*,* and adhere, with little deviation, to the institutions of Nanock, and the eight succeeding priests; in obedience to which, the *Khualasab* sect are usually occupied in civil and domestic duties. They cut off the hair of their heads and beards, and in their manners and appearance resemble the ordinary classes of the Hindoos.†

THE modern order of the Sicques, entitled *Khalsa*, was founded by Govind Sing; who, deviating from the ordinances of his predecessors, imparted a strong military spirit to his adherents, whose zealous attachment enabled him to indulge the bent of a fierce and turbulent temper, and to give scope to an ambition, naturally arising from the power which his popularity had created. Govind Sing is said to have restricted his sectaries from the use of tobacco, and to have enjoined them to permit the growth of the beard, and the hair of the head. The military division of the people is composed of the *Khalsa* sect, which, from a native harshness of features and haughtiness of deportment, is conspicuously discriminated from that of the *Khualasab*, and other classes of the foreign converts.

FOR the space of seventy years after the death of Nanock, the

* *Khualasab* conveys virtually the same meaning in the Arabic, as *Khalsa*, which signifies *pure, genuine, &c.*

† I have been informed that matrimonial connections are occasionally formed between the Hindoos, and *Khualasab* Sicques.

growth

growth of the Sicques was slow, and their conduct was regulated by a temperate discretion. But when the Moghul empire had received its mortal wound from the commotions which arose amongst the sons and the grandsons of Aurungzebe ; when it was no longer guided by the skilful and vigorous hand which had diffused wisdom and spirit throughout its vast machine, the disciples of Nanock issued into the field, and participated in the varying fortunes of the day. The rebellions of the distant provinces, and the factions and intrigues of the court, events which rapidly followed the death of Aurungzebe, gave a powerful aid to the exertions of the Sicques ; who improving the favourable occasion, carried their depredations, even in the reign of Bhabauder Shah, to the environs of the capital. The situation * of the country where the doctrine of the Sicques had been the most widely promulgated, and where they first formed a military body, contributed to augment their power, as well as afford shelter against a superior force of their enemies. On the skirts of forests and mountains, impervious to cavalry, they enjoyed also the benefits arising from the vicinity of an opulent populous territory, which at once afforded a store of converts and plunder.

THE Sicque common-wealth acquired an active strength from the spirit and valour of Bunda, who had inspired them with a zeal, which rendered meritorious every act of cruelty to the enemies of

* In the vicinity of the Punjab mountains.

their

their faith, and gave their attacks, until opposed by the collected force of the empire, an irresistible impulse. The success of this fierce adventurer, had allured to his standard a numerous body of profelytes: some to obtain a protection against the rapacity of the Sicque government, others to take shelter from the oppressions or just demands of the empire: whilst many embraced the new doctrine, from the hope of participating the plunder of the Punjab. The larger portion of the converts were of the tribe of Jatts * and Goojers; a people who are chiefly seen in the northern parts of India. They are esteemed skilful and active husbandmen, but notorious for a turbulent and restless temper.

THE defeat and death of Banda effected a total destruction of the power of the Sicques, and, ostensibly, an extirpation of their sect. An edict was issued by Furruck Sir, directing that every Sicque falling into the hands of his officers, should on a refusal of embracing the Mahometan faith, be put to the sword. A valuable reward was also given by the emperor, for the head of every Sicque; and such was the keen spirit that animated the persecution, such the success of the exertions, that the name of a Sicque no longer existed in the Moghul dominion. Those who still adhered to the tenets of Nanock, either fled into the mountains at the head of the Punjab, or cut off their hair, and exteriorly renounced the profession of their religion.

* The Khalah Sicques have largely originated from these tribes.

AFTER

AFTER a period of more than thirty years, the spark that had lain concealed amongst the ruins of the fabrick of Nanock, burst forth, and produced a flame which hath never been extinguished. It is mentioned that the Sicque forces appeared in arms at the period of Nadir Shah's return from Dehli,* when the Persian army, encumbered with spoil, and regardless of order, was attacked in the rear by detached predatory parties of Sicque cavalry, who occasionally fell upon the baggage-guards, and acquired a large plunder. During the periods of tumult and distress, which followed the Persian,† and the first Afghan invasion, the Sicques emerged more conspicuously from their places of concealment; and collecting a numerous party of promiscuous adventurers, they soon rose into military importance. Even at the low ebb to which the Sicques had been reduced by the destruction of their force, the death of their leader, and the proscription of their sect, they had continued to resort secretly to Amrut Sir; and as the attention of the empire became, at subsequent periods, fixed on subjects that demanded an undivided force, the Sicques were not molested in visiting their favourite place of worship, which gradually rose into the capital of their narrow territory. Meer Munnoo,‡ the governor of Lahore in the reign of Ahmed Shah,§ alarmed at an

* 1739.

† From the year 1739 to 1746.

‡ The son of Kummer ud Dein, the vizier of Mahomet Shah.

§ This prince succeeded to the empire in 1747, and was deposed in 1753.

encrease

increase of power, the evils of which had been already manifested by the devastations of the Sicques in his own country, made a vigorous attack on them; and it is supposed that their force would then have been annihilated, had not this people found a strenuous advocate in his minister Korah Mul, who was himself of the Khualafah sect, and diverted Meer Munnoo from reaping the full fruits of the superiority he had gained.

ADINA BEG KHAN, an officer in the service of Meer Munnoo, had been sent with an army into the centre of the Sicque districts, which he over-run; and, encountering their army some time in the year 1749, had defeated it with great slaughter.* A permanent accommodation was ultimately effected through the mediation of Korah Mul, between the Sicques and the governor of Lahore, who being engaged in operations that led to more interesting objects, the Sicques were left at liberty to acquire strength, and enlarge their territory, which extended from the vicinity of Lahore, to the foot of the mountains. Whilst Korah Mul lived, his influence over the Sicques confined them to their own limit, and restrained their depredations. But the death of this officer, who was slain † in an action fought with the Afghans, and the tumult which arose at the decease of Munnoo, ‡ from the various compe-

* This action was fought near the village of Mackavaul, in the northern districts of the Punjab.

† The death of Korah Mul happened in the year 1751.

‡ Meer Munnoo died in the year 1752.

titors to the government of Lahore, enabled the Sicques to fix the basis of a power, which, though severely shaken at a subsequent period, has raised them from a lawless banditti to the rank of sovereigns of an extensive dominion. The charm which had so powerfully operated in augmenting and consolidating the spacious empire of the Indian Moghuls, and had in the eastern world proclaimed it invincible, was now broken; and a wide theatre was opened, in which every band of bold adventurers had an ample scope to exercise their courage, and where the most alluring objects were held out to the grasp of ambition and avarice. The southern territories had been dismembered from the empire; and the Persians and Afghans, the Mahrattas and the Sicques, had severally plundered and laid waste the northern provinces, and the capital.

AFTER the death of Meer Munnoo, and a rapid succession of fleeting governors, the government of Lahore devolved on Adina Beg Khan;* and the court of Dehli, in opposition to the arrangements of the Duranny Ahmed Shah, who had annexed the Lahore province to his dominion, avowedly supported the power which Adina Beg had assumed in the Punjab. The courage and military experience of this officer found an active employment in curbing the turbulent and rapacious spirit of the Sicques: but aware of the advantages that would arise from a confederacy with a people whose

* The officer who defeated the Sicques at the battle of Mackavaul.

depre-

depredations, accompanied with every species of rapine, could not be prevented without continued warfare, Adina Beg made an alliance with the Sicques, founded on a scheme of combined hostilities against the Afghans, whose territories * he invited them to lay waste, without requiring participation of the booty. Every infringement of the compact being severely resented by Adina Beg, the Sicques were rarely seen interrupting the peace of his government.

THE court of Dehli, having by intrigue and occasional military aids, zealously contributed to promote the successes of the Lahore chief, Ahmed Shah brought an army in the year 1756 into India, to recover the possession of the Punjab, and to punish Ghaze-ud-Dien, the minister of Alumguir the Second, who had assumed an absolute authority in the capital. Adina Beg, an active supporter of the minister's interests, which were closely united with his own, not having a sufficient force to meet Ahmed Shah Duranny in the field, fled into the adjacent mountains, where he remained in concealment until the departure of the Afghan prince to his northern dominions.

IN the year 1757, or 1758, a numerous army of Mahrattas,†

M m 2

after

* The Afghans were at that time possessed of a tract of country, reaching from the Chinnaun river to the Indus.

† They had been invited into Hindostan by Ghaze-ud-Dien, to support an administration which was detested by the people, and opposed by a party at court. Had not

after subduing the adjacent territory, arrived in the city of Dehli, where their chiefs assumed an absolute sway. Adina Beg, aware of the benefits of an alliance with the Mahrattas, represented to their chiefs, that the Punjab garrisons, weakened by the departure of Ahmed Shah, would fall an easy conquest to their arms, which he offered to reinforce with his party, and the influence he possessed in that quarter. The Mahratta army moved without delay into the Punjab, and, expelling the Afghans from Sirhend and Lahore, reduced to their power a tract of country that extended to the river Jaylum.* National commotions calling the principal Mahratta officers into the Decan, they appointed Adina Beg Khan, who had largely promoted their success, the governor of Lahore : but he died early in the following year, at an advanced age, highly celebrated in Upper India for his military and political talents.

THE Sicques, awed by the superiour power of the Mahrattas, and fearful of incurring the resentment of Adina Beg, had not during his government, carried their depredations into the low country. In the course of the several expeditions which the Afghans made into India under Ahmed Shah, they were severely harraffed by the Sicques, who cut off many of their detached par-

not the arms of Ahmed Shah the Duranny prevailed over the Mahrattas at the battle of Pannifrett, it is probable that the Mahometan power would have been extinguished in India.

* The fifth Punjab river from the eastward.

ties

ties ; and evinced, in the various schemes of annoying the Afghans, an indefatigable intrepidity.

AHMED SHAH, having in conjunction with the Mahometan chiefs of Hindostan, routed the combined forces of the Hindoos at the battle of Pannifrett, in the beginning of the year 1761, and driven the Mahrattas from the northern provinces, meditated a full revenge on the Sicques ; who, during a small interval of his absence, had in the latter end of the same year, seized on the largest division of the Lahore province. Early in the year 1762, he entered the Punjab, which he over-run with a numerous army, diffusing the Sicques wherever they appeared, and diffusing a general terror by the havock which marked his invasion. The Afghan soon became possessed of all the low country, and the Sicques dismayed at his rapid success, and the cruelties exercised by his fierce soldiery, abandoned the plains, and sought a shelter with their families in the skirts of the mountains. A large party of Sicques had retired towards the northern districts* of Sirhend, which being more than an hundred miles distant from Lahore, the station of the Afghan army, they were not apprehensive of any immediate attack. But the motions and onset of Ahmed Shah were equally rapid and dreadful. He fell suddenly on this body in February 1762, having marched from Lahore in less

* The villages of Goojerwal and Baffpour, were at that time their common places of refuge.

than

than two days, and cut to pieces, it is said, twenty-five thousand of their cavalry. The Sicques, in their day of success, having defiled and destroyed the mosques and other sacred places of the Mahometans, compelling also many of them to embrace the faith of Nanock, now felt the savage vengeance of their enemies. Amrut Sir was raised to the ground, and the sacred waters choaked up with its ruins. Pyramids were erected, and covered with the heads of slaughtered Sicques; and it is mentioned, that Ahmed Shah caused the walls of the principal mosques which had been polluted by the Sicques to be washed with their blood, that the contamination might be removed, and the ignominy offered to the religion of Mahomet, expiated. Yet these examples of ferocious rigour did not quell the native courage of the Sicques, who still continue to issue from their fastnesses, to hover on the rear of the Afghan armies, and to cut off their scattered parties.

AHMED SHAH, in the close of the year 1762, returned into Afghanistan, which being composed of provinces recently conquered or acquired, and inhabited by a warlike fierce people, demanded a vigilant personal attention. A body of his troops, commanded by an officer of distinguished rank, had been stationed in the Lahore territory, and in the capital, which was strongly garrisoned. But soon after the march of Ahmed Shah, the Sicques were seen descending from their various holds on the Punjab, which they rapidly laid waste, and after several desultory actions, in which the Afghans were defeated, they besieged, and what seems extraordinary,

dinary, they took the city of Lahore; where wildly indulging the enmity that had never ceased to inflame them against these severe scourges of their nation, they committed violent outrages. The mosques that had been rebuilt or restored to use by the Mahometans, were demolished with every mark of contempt and indignation; and the Afghans, in chains, washed the foundations with the blood of hogs. They were also compelled to excavate the reservoir at Amrut Sir, which in the preceding year they had filled up. The Sicques, however, keenly actuated by resentment, set a bound to the impulse of revenge; and though the Afghan massacre and persecution must have been deeply imprinted on their minds, they did not, it is said, destroy one prisoner in cold blood.

THE records of the Sicques give a relation of a battle fought with the Afghans, previously to the capture of Lahore: but as its asserted issue does not correspond with the series of success, which conspicuously in India accompanied the Afghan arms under Ahmed Shah, or stand supported by any collateral proof to which I have had access, I am necessarily led to doubt some parts of the Sicque's relation. This event is said to have happened in October 1762, when the collected body of the Sicque nation, amounting to sixty thousand cavalry, had formed a junction at the ruins of Amrut Sir, for the purpose of performing some appointed ceremony, and where they resolved, expecting the attack, to pledge their national existence on the event of a battle. Ahmed Shah, at that time encamped

camped at Lahore, marched with a strong force to Amrut Sir,* and immediately engaged the Sicques; who, roused by the fury of a desperate revenge, in sight also of the ground sacred to the founders of their religion, whose monuments had been destroyed by the enemy they were then to combat, displayed, during a bloody contest, which lasted from the morning until night, an enthusiastic and fierce courage, which ultimately forced Ahmed Shah to draw off his army and retire with precipitation to Lahore. The Sicques, it is also said, pursued the enemy to that city, which they took after a short siege; and that Ahmed Shah, having made his escape before the surrender, crossed the Indus. Any probability of this event can only be reconciled by a supposition, that the army of Ahmed Shah had suffered some extraordinary reductions, previously to the period in which this occurrence† is said to have happened. Without a further discussion of this clouded fact, we will proceed to the common annals of the day, where it is seen that the Duranny returned into the Punjab, in the autumn of 1763, when he retook Lahore, and again drove the Sicques from the low country. The successes of this prince, though decided at the moment, were not followed by either a benefit to himself or to the country he conquered; and could be only traced by slaughter and rapine; for in the course of the following year, during his

* This place is about forty miles to the westward of Lahore.

† A total eclipse of the sun is said to have happened on the day of action.

short

short absence, the Sicques ravaged the Punjab, expelled the Afghan garrisons, and pursued their fortune with so vigorous a rapidity, that during the year 1764, they had over-run, and seized on, an extent of territory reaching from the borders of the Indus to the districts of Dehli.

AHMED SHAH, in the three following years, continued to maintain a desultory war with the Sicques; but possessing no treasure in India, fearing also the effects of a remote residence from his native dominion, he must have at length shrunk from the difficulties of conquering a numerous people, who when driven from the plains, possessed impenetrable retreats in forests and mountains; and, what was more dreadful to their enemies, an invincible courage.

AFTER the year 1767, the period of his last campaign in India, Ahmed Shah, seems to have wholly relinquished the design of subduing the Punjab. The Sicques now became the rulers of a large country, in every part of which they established an undivided authority, and raised in it the solid structure of a religion, in the propagation and defence of which, their persevering valour merit a common applause.

TIMUR SHAH, the reigning prince of Afghanistan, the son of Ahmed Shah, had made war on the Sicques with various success. During the interval of his last campaign in India, he wrested from them the city, with a large division of the province of Moultan; which the Sicques, contrary to the spirit of their national cha-

rafter, evacuated after a weak resistance. This surrender might on the first view be termed pusillanimous, especially when the inactive disposition of Timur is considered; but it seems to have been a natural consequence of their eternal divisions, and the fears entertained by the body at large, of the increase of individual power. The dominions of the Sicques, whose limits are ever in a state of fluctuation, was, in the year 1782, bounded on the north by the chain of mountains that extend in an oblique line across the head of the Punjab; on the east by the possessions of the emperor and his officers, which reach to Pannifrett and Kurrwaul; on the south-east by the Agra districts; on the south by Moultan; and on the west by the Indus, except where the town and independencies of Attock, and some petty chiefships, are interspersed.

THE Sicques have reduced the largest portion of the territory of Zabith Khan, leaving him little more than the fort of Ghous Ghar, with a very limited domain in its vicinity. This chief, the degenerate son of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, has made no vigorous effort in his defence; but thinking to soothe them, and divert their encroachments, assumed the name of a Sicque, and ostensibly, it is said, became a convert to the faith of Nanock.* It is not seen that he derived any benefit from his apostacy; for at the period of my journey through the Duab, the Sicques were investing his fort,

* Durm Sing, was the name taken by Zabith Khan. He was succeeded by his son Gholam Bhahauder, in 1785, who, though an active soldier, and respected by the Sicques, is not emancipated from their power.

and

and he was reduced to the desperate alternative of calling in a body of their mercenaries to his assistance.

IN the beginning of the year 1783, a party of Sicques traversing the Ghous Ghur districts, approached the Ganges, where it forms the western limit of Rohilcund, with an intention of crossing the river, and invading the country of the vizier. Being at that time in Rohilcund, I witnessed the terror and general alarm which prevailed amongst the inhabitants, who, deserting the open country, had retired into forts and places inaccessible to cavalry. The Sicques, perceiving the difficulty of passing a river in the face of the vizier's troops, which were posted on the eastern bank, receded from their purpose. This fact has been adduced to shew that the Sicques command an uninterrupted passage to the Ganges.*

THUS have I laid before you, according to the most substantial authorities that I could obtain, the origin of the Sicques; their first territorial establishment, and the outlines of the progress they made, in extending a spacious dominion, and consolidating the power which they at this day possess. We have seen this people, at two different periods, combating the force of the Moghul empire, and so severely depressed by its superior strength, that the existence of their sect was brought to the edge of annihilation.

* The Sicque forces assembled again in the beginning of the year 1785, when they entered the province of Rohilcund, and having laid it waste, for the space of one hundred miles, they returned unmolested.

The Afghan war involved them in a series of still more grievous calamity; as they had then laid the foundation of a growing power, and more sensibly felt the ravages of a formidable foe. They were driven from the sanctuary of their religion, and persecuted with a rage which seemed to keep pace with the encreasing strength and inveteracy of their enemy: yet we have seen, that in the lowest ebb of fortune, they retained the spirit of resource; that they boldly seized on every hold which offered support; and, by an invincible perseverance, that they ultimately rose superior in a contest with the most potent prince of his age. Grand auxiliary causes operated also in the formation and final establishment of the Sicques' dominion. It hath already been noticed, that the first efforts of this people commenced at a time when the Moghul empire lost its energy and vigour; when intestine commotions, the intrigues of a luxurious court, and the defection of distant governors, had promoted the increase of individual interests, and a common relaxation of allegiance.

THE decisive superiority obtained over the Sicques, by Meer Munnoo, would, we must believe, with a judicious application of its uses, have removed to a farther distance the rank which this state now maintains in Hindostan. To develop the actions of men, with whose history we are trivially acquainted, would be fabricating too refined a system of speculation; nor would I now investigate so obscure a subject, were it not to generally observe, that the preservation of the Sicques from the effects of Meer Munnoo's

Munnoo's success, appears to have been largely promoted by the interference of his minister Khorah Mul, who being himself a Sicque, naturally became a trusty advocate of the sect; and who, it is said, completed his ascendancy over the Mahometan, by a considerable donation. But the distracted state of Ahmed Shah's Afghan and Persian dominions, which urgently called on a personal administration, afforded the Sicques the most favourable occasions of accomplishing the conquest of the Punjab; and it is probable, that, had the Afghan prince been enabled to prolong his campaigns in Hindostan, the Sicques would not, during his life, have attained any extensive degree of national consequence.

I FIND an embarrassment in applying a distinct term to the form of the Sicque government, which, on the first view, bears an appearance of aristocracy; but a closer examination discovers a large vein of popular power branching through many of its parts. No honorary or titular distinction is conferred on any member * of the state, and the chiefs are treated with a deference that would seem to arise only from the military charges they may at the instant be invested with, and from a self-preserving regard to the subordination necessarily required in conducting an armed body. Though orders are issued in a Sicque army, and a species of obedience observed, punishments are rarely inflicted; and the chiefs, who

* The posterity of the ten priests are occasionally denominated *purgadabs*, that is, descendants of a saint, or prophet.

often

often command parties of not more than fifty men, being numerous, its motions are tumultuous and irregular. An equality of rank is maintained in their civil society, which no class of men, however wealthy or powerful, is suffered to break down. At the periods when general councils of the nation were convened, which consisted of the army at large, every member had the privilege of delivering his opinion; and the majority, it is said, decided on the subject in debate. The Khalfah Sicques, even of the lowest order, are turbulent people, and possess a haughtiness of deportment which, in the common occurrences of life, peculiarly marks their character. Examples of this disposition I have myself witnessed, and one of them I think merits a distinct notice. In travelling through the Siringnaghur country, our party was joined by a Sicque horseman, and being desirous of procuring his acquaintance, I studiously offered him the various attentions which men observe to those they court. But the Sicque received my advances with a fixed reserve and disdain, giving me, however, no individual cause of offence; for his deportment to the other passengers was not less contemptuous. His answer, when I asked him the name of his chief, was wholly conformable to the observations I had made of his nation. He told me (in a tone of voice, and with an expression of countenance, which seemed to revolt at the idea of servitude) that he disdained an earthly superiour, and acknowledged no other master than his prophet!

THE civil and military government of the Sicques, before a
common

common interest had ceased to actuate its operations, was conducted by general and limited assemblies, which presided over the different departments of the state. The grand convention, called in their language *Goorimotta*, was that in which the army met to transact the more important affairs of the nation; as the declaration of war or peace, forming alliances, and detaching parties on the service of the year. The amount of the contributions levied on the public account was reported to this assembly, and divided among the chiefs, proportionably to the number of their troops. They were at the same time obliged to distribute a certain share of this property to their soldiers, who, on any cause of dissatisfaction, made no hesitation in quitting their service, and following a more popular leader. Subordinate officers were established for registering the political correspondence of the state, and for providing warlike stores; and the administration of ecclesiastical affairs was entrusted to a certain society of religious, composed chiefly of the descendants of their original priests, but they did not possess any influence in the temporal regulation of the state. These were the principal ordinances enacted by the first chiefs, when the people were united, and a common object governed their public conduct. The dominions of the Sicques, now widely extended, have been since divided into numerous states, which pursue an independent interest, without a regard to general policy. The grand assembly is now rarely summoned, nor have the Sicques, since the Afghan war, been embarked in any united cause.

THEIR

THEIR military force may be said to consist essentially of cavalry; for though some artillery is maintained, it is awkwardly managed, and its uses ill understood; and their infantry, held in low estimation, usually garrison the forts, and are employed in the meaner duties of the service. A Sicque horseman is armed with a matchlock and sabre of excellent metal, and his horse is strong and well formed. In this matter I speak from a personal knowledge, having in the course of my journey seen two of their parties, each of which amounted to about two hundred horsemen. They were clothed in white vests,* and their arms were preserved in good order: the accoutrements, consisting of priming horns and ammunition pouches, were chiefly covered with European scarlet cloth, and ornamented with gold lace. The predilection of the Sicques for the match-lock musquet, and the constant use they make of it, causes a difference in their manner of attack from that of any other Indian cavalry; a party, from forty to fifty, advance in a quick pace to the distance of a carabine shot from the enemy, and then, that the fire may be given with the greater certainty, the horses are drawn up, and their pieces discharged; when, speedily retiring about a hundred paces, they load and repeat the same mode of annoying the enemy. The horses have been so expertly trained to the performance of this operation, that on receiving a stroke of

* A long calico gown, having a close body and sleeves, with a white skirt.

the

the hand, they stop from a full career. But it is not by this mode of combat that the Sicques have become a formidable people. Their successes and conquests have largely originated from an activity unparalleled by other Indian nations, from their endurance of excessive fatigue, and a keen resentment of injuries. The personal endowments of the Sicques are derived from a temperance of diet, and a forbearance from many of those sensual pleasures which have enervated the Indian Mahometans. A body of their cavalry has been known to make marches of forty or fifty miles, and to continue the exertion for many successive days.

THE forces of this nation must be numerous, though I am not possessed of any substantial document for ascertaining the amount. A Sicque will confidently say, that his country can furnish three hundred thousand cavalry, and, to authenticate the assertion, affirms that every person, holding even a small property, is provided with a horse, match-lock, and side-arms. But in qualification of this account, if we admit that the Sicques when united can bring two hundred thousand horse into the field, their force in cavalry is greater than that of any other state in Hindostan. A passage which I extracted from a memoir,* written at Dehli in 1777, exhibits a lively picture of this people in their military capacity. "The Sicques," it represents, "are

* I believe it was written by Colonel Folier.

“ in general strong and well made; accustomed from their infancy
“ to the most laborious life, and hardest fare, they make marches,
“ and undergo fatigues that really appear astonishing. In their
“ excursions they carry no tents or baggage, except, perhaps, a
“ small tent for the principal officer: the rest shelter themselves
“ under blankets, which serve them also in the cold weather to
“ wrap themselves in, and which, on a march, cover their saddles.
“ They have commonly two, some of them three, horses each, of
“ the middle size, strong, active, and mild tempered. The pro-
“ vinces of Lahore and Moultan, noted for a breed of the best
“ horses in Hindostan, afford them an ample supply; and indeed
“ they take the greatest care to encrease it by all means in their
“ power. Though they make merry on the demise of any of their
“ brethren, they mourn for the death of a horse: thus shewing
“ their love of an animal so necessary to them in their professional
“ capacity. The food of the Sicques is of the coarsest kind, and
“ such as the poorest people in Hindostan use from necessity.
“ Bread, baked in ashes, and soaked in a mash made of different
“ sorts of pulse, is the best dish, and such as they never indulge
“ in but when at full leisure; otherwise, vetches and tares, hastily
“ parched, is all they care for. They abhor smoking tobacco,
“ for what reason I cannot discover; but intoxicate themselves
“ freely with spirits of their own country manufacture. A cup
“ of the last they never fail taking after a fatigue at night. Their
“ dress is extremely scanty: a pair of long blue drawers, and a
“ kind

“ kind of checkered plaid, a part of which is fastened round the
“ waist, and the other thrown over the shoulder, with a mean
“ turban, form their clothing and equipage. The chiefs are dis-
“ tinguished by wearing some heavy gold bracelets on their wrists,
“ and sometimes a chain of the same metal bound round their
“ turbans, and by being mounted on better horses : otherwise, no
“ distinction appears amongst them. The chiefs are numerous,
“ some of whom have the command of ten or twelve thousand ca-
“ valry; but this power is confined to a small number, the in-
“ ferior officers maintaining from one to two thousand, and many
“ not more than twenty or thirty horses, a certain quota of which
“ is furnished by the chief, the greater part being the individual
“ property of the horsemen.”

FROM the spirit of independence so invariably infused amongst them, their mutual jealousy, and a rapacious roving temper, the Sicques at this day are seldom seen co-operating in national concert, but actuated by the influence of an individual ambition, or private distrust, they pursue such plans only as coincide with these motives. An example of their forces being engaged in opposite interests, has been noticed in the case of Mhah Sing, who succoured the Rajah of Jumbo, against the Sicque party, which had invaded his country. Before the chiefs of the Mountaineers country, at the head of the Punjab, were reduced to a tributary state, severe depredations were committed on them by the Sicques, who plundered and destroyed their habitations, carried off the cattle, and, if

strong and well formed, the male children, who were made converts to the faith of Nanock. But since the payment of a fixed tribute has been stipulated, which does not amount to more than five per cent. on the revenue, the Mountaineers are little molested, except when the Sicques have been called in to adjust their domestic quarrels.

THE extensive and fertile territory of the Sicques, and their attachment and application in the midst of warfare to the occupations of agriculture, must evidently produce a large revenue. The districts dependant on Lahore in the reign of Aurungzebe, produced, according to Mr. Bernier, a revenue of two hundred and forty-six lacks and ninety-five thousand rupees; * and we are naturally led to suppose, from the industrious skill of the Sicques in the various branches of cultivation, that no great decrease of that amount can have taken place since the Punjab has fallen into their possession.

AN extensive and valuable commerce is also maintained in their country, which has been extended to distant quarters of India; particularly to the provinces of Bengal and Bahar, where many Sicque merchants of opulence at this time reside. The Omi-chund who took so active, though unfortunate, a share in the revolution, which the English effected in Bengal, was a Sicque; as

* Two millions four hundred and sixty-nine thousand five hundred pounds sterling, at two shillings for the rupee.

is his adopted son, who is now an inhabitant of Calcutta. Merchants of every nation or sect, who may introduce a traffick into their territories, or are established under their government, experience a full protection, and enjoy commercial privileges in common with their own subjects. At the same time it must be noticed, that such immunities are granted only to those who remain amongst them, or import wares for the immediate supply of the Sicque markets. But the foreign traders, or even travellers, who attempt to pass through the Punjab, are often plundered, and usually ill-treated. In the event of no molestation being offered to people of this description, the escape is ever spoken of with a degree of joyful surprize, and a thanksgiving is offered to Providence for the singular escape. This conduct, inimical to the progress of civilization, and an impediment to the influx of wealth, proceeds from an extreme jealousy of strangers, added to a rapacity of temper, which make them averse to the encouragement of any scheme in whose success they do not immediately participate.

THE Sicques are not rigorous in their stipulations with the Mahometan proselytes, who, if they abstain from beef's flesh, (which is held in equal abhorrence by the Sicques as by the Hindoos), and perform the more ostensible duties, as burning their dead, and preserving the hair of the head, an indulgent latitude is granted in all the other articles of the creed of Nanock. The Mahometans who reside in the Punjab are subject to occasional oppression, and often to the insult of the lower classes of the people ;
among

among whom it is not an uncommon practice to defile the places of worship, by throwing in the carcases of hogs and other things held impure by the Musselman law. The Mahometans are also prohibited from announcing their stated times of prayer, which, conformably to their usage, is proclaimed in a loud tone of voice: A Sicque who in the chase shall have slain a wild hog, is frequently known to compel the first Mahometan he meets to carry to his home the body of the animal; and, on being initiated into the rites of their religion, the Sicques will sometimes require a Mahometan convert to bind on his arm the tusk of a boar, that by this act of national impurity, he may the more avowedly testify a renunciation and contempt of the tenets of his former faith. These facts will sufficiently mark the haughty and insulting demeanor, which, with few deviations, forms a prominent feature in the character of the military Sicques; but we may also ascribe a certain portion of their severe and contumelious treatment of the Mahometans, to a remembrance of recent injuries.

THE discordant interests which agitate the Sicque nation, and the constitutional genius of the people, must incapacitate them, during the existence of these causes, from becoming a formidable offensive power; nor are they invested with that species of executive strength which is necessary to advance and establish a distant conquest. In the defence and recovery of their country, the Sicques displayed a courage of the most obstinate kind, and manifested a perseverance, under the pressure of calamities, which bear
an

an ample testimony of native resource, when the common danger had roused them to action, and gave but one impulse to their spirit. Should any future cause call forth the combined efforts of the Sicques to maintain the existence of empire and religion, we may see some ambitious chief led on by his genius and success, and, absorbing the power of his associates, display, from the ruins of their commonwealth, the standard of monarchy. The page of history is filled with the like effects, springing from the like causes. Under such a form of government, I have little hesitation in saying, that the Sicques would be soon advanced to the first rank amongst the native princes of Hindostan; and would become a terror to the surrounding states.*

I am,

Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

* Mhadgee Scindia, a Mahratta chief, by seizing the relics of the Imperial authority and domain, has placed himself in the situation which the Sicques must have been desirous of occupying. This resolution will naturally create a national enmity, perhaps a contest, between the northern branch of the Mahratta empire, and the Sicques.

LET-

LETTER XII.

Kashmire, April, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

ON the 17th of April, I left Jumbo; and, accompanied by a Kashmirian servant, who carried my baggage, I reached the small village of Dunshaulah, after a painful journey on foot, of ten coffes. A review of my feet, too plainly shewed that they had not been proof against the steep and rocky roads: I had clambered over; indeed they had suffered so severely by bruises and excoriations, that I could scarcely walk. HAVING bound up my feet with bandages soaked in oil, I reached, on the 18th, though with difficulty, the village of Nagrolah—five coffes. During these two last days, I paid, at the different custom-houses, certain small fees of office, which were not authorized charges; but being known to be a stranger, and apparently in a condition to satisfy the demand, I was seldom permitted to pass a custom-house unmolested. Though the lacerations in my feet gave me much pain, especially at the first setting off, I pursued my journey in good spirits, being pro-

ted by the quiet disposition of the people, and sure of procuring a good meal in the evenings, with commodious lodging. The first night, we were received into a retail shop, at Dunshaulah, where I slept on my large blanket, and supped on some spiced meat and biscuits, which my Jumbo host had provided: and at Nagrolah we were accommodated by a Mahometan family, who supplied me with a standing bed.

On the 19th, at Luttere—eight coffes. The latter part of the journey led me up a high and steep hill, and the sun, then at its meridian height, had nearly overpowered me; when, on a sudden, I found myself on a summit, where some charitable Hindoo had erected a small, but a cool, building,* plentifully supplied with pots of water. Under this hospitable shade, I was permitted, though a Mahometan, to rest during the day, and to sleep at night. Many Hindoos came in for the benefit of the water and shade, and observing that I was lame, they treated me with an attentive kindness, and dispensed with my rising when any of their principal people entered.

In the number of those who came to partake of the charitable uses of this house, was a Mahometan, who ejaculating his *Bismillah*,† laid himself down, without farther ceremony, in the interior quarter of the apartment. A Hindoo of rank, accom-

* Called, in the language of the country, *Durmsfallen*, which signifies "A charitable foundation."

† An Arabick compound word, signifying "In the name of God."

panied

panied by several attendants, entered soon after, and observing that the mendicant had occupied the most convenient, as well as honorary place, and that he offered no mark of attention or respect, the Hindoo ordered that his chattles, which were heavy, should be thrown into the road. On exclaiming against this act of ejection, he was told, that though the house was erected for the purpose of common accommodation, with no view of excluding any nation or sect; yet in some cases, as in the present, an observance of precedence and deference was necessary. This anecdote will serve to generally delineate the native difference betwixt the temper of a Hindoo and a Mahometan. What do you think would have been the reception of a Hindoo, particularly of a religious order, had he come into a karavanseerah, in a Mahometan country, and throw his brass pot, his rice, or pease, into an apartment which Mahometans had previously occupied? Could the Hindoo have acted with such indiscretion—his punishment would have been more disgraceful and severe than death. From long observation, I can with confidence say, that the Hindoos are a more temperate people, and much more useful in the various relations of life, than any class of Mahometans that have come within my knowledge.

At the vicinity of Nagrolah commence the districts of the Chinnanee chief, a dependant on Jumbo, who possesses a revenue of about a lack of rupees. This chief does not remit any tribute to his superior, but assists his government with a quota of troops

in the event of exigency ; and conformably to this tenure he now serves in the campaign against the Sicques.

On the 20th, at Chinnanee ; a neat and populous town, situate on the brow of a hill ; at the foot of which, on the eastern side, runs a rapid stream passing to the left. This channel is passed by means of two stout fir beams, one of which reaches from the shore to an insulated rock in the centre of the current, on which it is fastened by wooden stakes ; and the other extends from the rock to the opposite bank. The velocity with which the water was precipitated, its roaring noise, and the narrow shaking bridge, gave full occasion for the use of my eye, and the steadiness of my head. At Chinnanee, I was taxed in the sum of a rupee for permission to cross the river Chinnaun, which forms the western limit of this chiefship.

On the 21st, at Dumomunjee—seven coffes. A few scattered houses, in one of which I was accommodated by a Kashmirian family, who had taken a farm in that quarter. The approach to this village leads through a valley, covered with luxuriant herbage, and interspersed with some of the most beautiful shrubs I ever saw. From Jumbo hither, the road tended, as nearly as I could ascertain, to the east and east-by-south ; but from the vicinity of Dumomunjee it leads to the north and north-by-west.*

ON

* My servant informed me that robberies are often committed in these parts, by the inhabitants of an adjacent district ; and to avoid which, travellers have been induced to make

! On the 22d, at Naufman — nine coffes : a small village in the Kishtewer country ; the only independant Hindoo territory I have yet seen in India. This day crossed the Chinnaun, usually denominated at this place, from the mode of crossing it, the Chickah. The manner of conveying passengers and all sorts of property over this stream is curious, and deserves explanation. The Chinnaun is about seventy or eighty yards broad, and, like the rivers of this part of India, from the declivity of the country, very rapid. On the opposite banks are fixed strong wooden posts, of about four feet in height, on the upper ends of which a stout rope is tightly extended, and is joined below to a smaller one, by hoops of twisted osiers, — In the centre of the small rope, to which only the hoops are firmly attached, hangs a vehicle of net-work, for the conveyance of merchandise and passengers, which is supported from the main rope by a wooden slider, in the form and size of a bullock's yoke, to whose ends the vehicle is fastened ; and a sufficient length of both ends of the small rope permits it to be landed on either side of the river. It appears that the seat, or as it is termed in this county, the Chickah, is by mutual agreement kept on the Kishtewer side, during the night. In defiance of my passport, the officer at the Chinnanee limit, taxed me in an additional fee ; and I was also compelled to buy my way through an inferior tribe of

make a deviation from the more direct track. But I apprehend that the abrupt steepness of some of the ranges of mountains in this quarter, has caused this oblique direction.

harpies,

harpies, who infested the water side. Anxious to arrive at the end of the stage, being both hungry and tired, I endeavoured to pacify their clamours ; but other demands were yet against me : for this extraordinary race of ferrymen, having conveyed my servant and our little baggage over half of the river, kept them swinging there, and declared that they should be detained until a second payment was made. Though this impediment materially affected me, I could not resist laughing at the awkward position of the unfortunate domestic, who bawled out to me, from his slack rope, that they were a pack of hardened rogues, and that he would rather be kept hanging all night, than consent to give them a farthing more. But the necessities of my situation cooled my resentment, and obliged me to purchase his release.

AT Naufman, I waited on a Mahometan of some distinction, who was travelling into Kashmire, and I requested permission to travel in his suite, that I might with more success, I informed him, repel the dreaded attack of the custom-house officers ; who, since my departure from Jumbo, had extorted a larger sum than was proportioned to the state of my finances. At the distance of every ten or twelve miles from Jumbo to the Chinnaun river, one of these petty tyrants takes his stand ; and on the payment of a stipulated sum to the government, collects the public duties, as well as enforces every species of private exaction ; and such taxes have become the more grievous to the merchant, by their being equally levied on the transportation of goods through a district, as at the actual

actual place of sale. From Kashmire to Lucknow are not less than thirty stations at which a duty of three and four per cent. is levied on every quality of merchandize : this charge, with the expences necessarily incurred in the course of a tedious and distant land-conveyance, largely enhances the price of shauls in the lower part of India. Zulphucar Khan, the person whom I had addressed, readily offered me assistance, and admitted me, without reserve, into his party. This Khan had lately served the chief of Jumbo, and had been employed in the management of a district which that chief holds in Kashmire. But on the charge of some default the Mahometan was recalled ; and, after undergoing a rigorous confinement, as well as severe tortures, the effect of which had destroyed his right hand, he was permitted to retire into Kashmire, where his family now resides.

On the 23d, we proceeded, six coffes, and halted on the summit of a steep and uninhabited mountain : the air, in itself bleak, was made painfully cold by the fall of a heavy rain, which did not cease during the night. It were almost superfluous to say, that the person who makes this journey should possess a strong and vigorous constitution, and he should also endeavour to cordially wean himself from the desire of every luxury.

On the 24th, at Hullweiggin, a village composed of detached hamlets—five coffes. The journey of this day consisted wholly of clambering over hills, and I may add, rolling down them. The protection of the Khan was conspicuously manifested at this custom-

tom-house, where I only paid one quarter of a rupee ; and being now considered an established member of his family, I was treated at our places of halt with much civility. All the custom-houses on the north side of the Chinnaun, are in the hands of Kashmirians, who have found in the Hindoo districts a safe and profitable retreat from the oppressions of their own government. The inhabitants of Kishtewar are Hindoos, though the chief is a Mahometan ; but we may suppose no very rigid one, for either he or his father, became a convert, to effect some purpose with the governor of Kashmire.

On the 25th, at Bannaul—seven coffes. A small village, dependant on Kashmire ; where we were accommodated in a mosque,* the common lodging of Mahometan travellers, in places not supplied with karavanferahs. Much hail and rain having fallen this day, the path, a winding and narrow one, became so slippery, that our progress was very slow ; and my shoes, which were purchased at Jumbo, now evinced so many wide marks of dissolution, that I was obliged to tie them to my feet with cords. At the distance of three coffes to the south-east of the village of Bannaul, we passed the boundary of a division of the Kashmire territory, lying without the greater circle of mountains. The governors of Kashmire permit the fertile valley of Bannaul, of ten or twelve miles in length, to remain uncultivated, that it may not

* It was small, and built of wood.

afford

afford shelter or provision to the bordering Hindoo states; who, in former periods, have, through this tract, approached the interior passes of Kashmire.

On the 26th, at the town of Durroo, or Surroo, a station—seven cosses. The first part of this road leads over a mountain, whose ascent is computed, in a winding direction, at six miles. On the summit, then covered with snow, except where a stream of water intervenes, are seen the plains of Kashmire, extending, in a long range, from the south-east to the north-west, and exhibiting a beautiful diversity of landscape. The view, long a rare one to me, was highly grateful, and excited a train of pleasing ideas, which the successful progress of my journey contributed to heighten, and which I continued to indulge, until the extreme chillness of the air compelled me to descend into a warmer climate.

HAVING now brought you to a near view of this land of pleasure, I am urged, that the description may be more explanatory, to call back your attention to the country and people I have lately visited. —From Lall Dong to the Ganges, the face of the country forms a close chain of woody mountains, and did not one or two miserable hamlets feebly interpose, you would pronounce that division of Siringnaghur fitted only for the habitation of the beasts of the forest. Elephants abound there, in numerous herds; but are not to be seen, it is said, on the west side of the Jumna. In the vicinity of Nhan, the country is interspersed with low hills, and frequently opens into extensive vallies; which having, perhaps, ever lain waste,

are overgrown with low wood. From thence to Bellaspour, the scene is changed into piles of lofty mountains, whose narrow breaks barely serve to discharge the descending streams. From Bellaspour, fertile vallies, though not wide, extend to Bissouly, where the country is again covered with high hills, which, with little variation, stretch to the limits of Kashmire. The boundaries of Kish-tewer, except to the place of my entrance and departure, are not specified; nor is the amount of the revenues; an omission caused by my inability to procure any substantial authority. The road from Lall Dong to Kashmire, as accurately as could be ascertained, from an observation of the sun's course, tended generally to the north-west, west-north-west, and west by north; except where the deviation is otherwise noted. The sides of the inhabited mountains produce wheat, barley, and a variety of the small grains peculiar to India. The cultivated spaces project from the body of the hill, in separate flats, in the form of a range of semicircular stairs: with a broad base and a narrow summit. The ground, which is strong and productive, has been propelled, it should seem, into these projections by the action of the rains, which fall among these mountains with great violence, from June till October; and is now preserved in this divided and level state by buttresses of loose stones, which bind in the edge of every flat. Rice is also cultivated in the narrow vallies, but not in a great quantity; nor is it the usual food of the inhabitants, who chiefly subsist on wheat, bread, and pease made into a thick soup. From Nhan, the northern sides of the hills

hills produce the fir,* in great plenty; and in the country between Jumbo and Kashmire, are seen many pines, but I observed they only grow on the north face of the mountains. I have frequently eat my meal under the shade of a spreading willow, which here, as in Europe, delights in hanging over a stream. The climate is not favourable to fruits and vegetables, being too hot for the Persian products, and not sufficiently warm to mature those of India: though the white mulberry must be excepted, which, at Jumbo, is of a large size, and of an exquisite flavour. The villages of the Mountaineers, or rather their hamlets, stand generally on the brow of a hill; and consist of from four to six or eight small scattered houses; which are built of rough stones, laid in a clay loam, and usually flat roofed: I have also seen, though not often, sloping roofs of wood. The resinous parts of the fir, cut in slips, supply the common uses of the lamp, in all the places where that tree abounds; but the method of extracting its turpentine, or tar, does not seem to be known. The natives of these mountains are composed of the different classes of Hindoos, and little other difference of manners exists between them and those of the southern quarters of India than is seen amongst a people who occupy the high and low lands of the same country. The scarcity of wealth, by depressing the growth of luxury, has given them a rude simplicity of character,

* That species of it called the Scots fir.

and has impeded the general advancement of civilization. They have no spacious buildings for private or public use, nor in the performance of religious offices do they observe those minuter or refined ceremonies that are practised by the southern Hindoos.

At Taullah Mhokee* a small volcanic fire issues from the side of a mountain, on which the Hindoos have raised a temple that has long been of celebrity and favorite resort among the people of the Punjab. Fire being the purest of the elements, the Hindoos consider it, as did most of the ancient Asiatic nations, the fittest emblem to represent the Deity. All places which produce a subterraneous flame are held sacred by the Hindoos, who do not permit any image to be placed near it; believing that other symbols would tend to sully the purity of this representation: and I have often noticed, that those Hindoos who are the most conversant in the rites of their religion, never omitted, at the first sight of fire in the course of the day, to offer up a prayer of adoration. The Mountaineers invariably preserved the beard, and instead of bowing the head in salutation, as in Lower India, they embrace the party addressed, and incline the head over his left shoulder. The growth of the beard is encouraged, perhaps, from a certain ferocity of disposition incident to their situation, and generally predominant in

* This word signifies "The mouth of the flame." The place is situate eight or nine miles to the northward of Nadone, the principal town in the Kangrah country.

the

the disposition of Mountaineers, which prompts them, in different modes, to shew a disdain and contempt for the softer manners of the natives of the low country.*

THE women have the olive complexion, are delicately shaped, and evince a freedom in their manner, which, without a tendency to immodesty, or connected with the habits of licentiousness, seems the result of the common confidence reposed in them by the men: I have seen a woman stop, though carrying a pot of water, and converse unreservedly with passengers; giving them an information of the road, or any other ordinary intelligence. Their dress consists of a petticoat, with a border, usually of different colours; a close jacket, covering half of the waist, and a loose stomacher to the fore part of it, which reaches to the girdle. Their hair, which they hold in as high an estimation as that beautiful appendage can be regarded by the gayest females of Europe, is plaited with black silk, or cotton strings, and falls down the back; over which they throw, in a graceful fashion, a veil, which seldom touches, and never wholly conceals, the face. The women of the principal peo-

* A swelling of the exterior part of the throat, which is ascribed to the noxious quality of the water, prevails among the Mountaineers. As the same complaint, proceeding, probably, from the like cause, is incident to certain inhabitants of the Alps and other mountainous countries in Europe, the origin of it has, doubtless, been scientifically investigated and explained. I will, therefore, only observe, that the water issuing from these mountains is impregnated, from the large mixture of snow, with a crude and cold quality; and may have acquired its alledged pernicious property from being confined in channels, which the shade of the woods and the height of the hills preclude from a free circulation of air and the rays of the sun.

ple,

ple, in the manner of the Mahometans, are kept in private apartments: this practice, existing in a country * where little danger is apprehended from foreign intrusion, affords a belief, that the concealment of the higher ranks of women has been an established custom of the Hindoos, previously to the date of the Mahometan conquest of India. It was once my opinion, that the Hindoos had secluded them from the public view that they might not be exposed to the intemperance of the Mahometan conquerors; but after perceiving the usage adopted amongst the sequestered Mountaineers, and also amongst the various independent Mahratta states, I am induced to think that the exclusion of women from society, prevailed in India before the period of the Afghan or Tartar invasions. At the same time, were a conclusion to be drawn from certain customs of the Hindoos, now obsolete, but noticed in their history, I would say, that they did not, in more ancient times, confine any class of their women; but, as their manners, from the influx of wealth, and consequent luxury, became less simple, that the princes and nobles of the country produced the innovation from a desire of impressing the populace with a greater respect for their families. The story of the incarnations of Vyshnow, and other ancient legends, shews that the Hindoo women were admitted into the assembly of men, and often possessed an extensive sway. In the history of their celebrated Ram, who appears to have been a powerful

* Mountainous and difficult of access to a hostile nation.

foldier,

foldier, is seen a passage which serves to illustrate this position, and to trace also, to a high source, a mode of tryal formerly established in Europe.

It is necessary to inform you, that Sree Mun Narrain, the Supreme Deity of the Hindoos, together with his indivisible associates, Mhah Letchimy, and the Snake, for the purpose of correcting certain evils which had at that time deranged our terrestrial world, found it expedient to personify human creatures : Narrain assumed the form of Ram, a renowned foldier ; Letchimy became his wife, under the name of Seetah Devce ; and the Snake was transformed into the body of Letchimun, the brother and companion of Ram. It is seen that these personages mixed freely in the societies of the world, nor does any part of the history notice the retirement of Seetah : she is, indeed, represented coming forth on every occasion which could, with propriety, permit the interference of her sex. A service of importance calling upon Ram's individual exertion, he consigned Seetah to the charge of Letchimun : the lady and her guardian remained some time in security and quiet ; when a famed magician, instigated no doubt, by the devil, who is ever on the watch to draw astray mortals, particularly the female division of them, came that way, saw Seetah, and became violently enamoured. This subtle man, having discovered, it is supposed by his spells and incantations, that the eyes of women are the soonest ensnared, let fly, full in the sight of Seetah, a bird of brilliant and beautiful plumage. This artifice had the most powerful effect ; for the de-

luded

luded fair one instantly conjured Letchimun, by every pledge he held dear, by the affection he bore to her, by his friendship for Ram, to procure for her the charming bird. Letchimun, amazed and much troubled at this entreaty, endeavoured to describe the eminent danger of quitting her in so perilous a situation, his dread of Ram's displeasure for the desertion of so grand a trust: in short, he urged every argument which a regard for his own character or her safety could suggest. The dazzling hues of the bird had so amply filled the mind of Seetah, that no space remained for the counsel of Letchimun; she must possess this charming object of her wishes, or become the most miserable of women. On the repeated denial of Letchimun to gratify so dangerous a request, blinded by the disappointment of her hopes, and impelled by a paroxysm of rage, she accused him of the design of seduction, which she alleged to be the reason of his refusal to leave her. Letchimun, now convinced of the inefficacy of argument, and the necessity of acquiescence, went in quest of the bird; but previously to his departure he drew a magic circle around the spot where Seetah stood, and told her, that within that space no calamity could enter. Letchimun had no sooner gone; than the plotting necromancer, assuming the appearance of an old man, approached, with a feeble and decrepid step, the place where Seetah stood, and, through an apparent excess of weakness, extended himself on the ground. He besought her, in a piteous tone of voice, for a little water to allay his thirst, and restore his exhausted strength. The humane, but ill-

ill-fated, Seetah, felt the force of the old man's prayer, and, with a bosom overflowing with benevolence, she stepped, unmindful of her safety, beyond the prescribed bounds, and fell that instant into the power of her betrayer. Here the story wanders into a wilder field of fable; where I should reap little credit, or you improvement. I will, therefore, content myself with mentioning, that after Ram had recovered Seetah, he ordered, for the removal of certain suspicions which had crept into his own breast, and for effectually shutting the mouth of slander, which began to open, that she should be judged by the ordeal trial. Seetah, eager to banish every doubt from the mind of her lord, and to exhibit to the world a public test of her purity, joyfully heard the mandate; and, without shew of dread, walked over the burning iron. But the feet of Seetah, says the story, "being shod with innocence, the scorching heat was to her a bed of flowers."

PARDON me for the intrusion of this Eastern tale, which might justly be deemed a trifling one, did it not indicate that the women of rank, among the more ancient Hindoos, were not excluded from the public eye, and that this people were acquainted with the trial by fire at an early period of time. The same uses may be derived from this story as are contained in the Arabian Nights; where, amidst the olio of talisman, genii, and devils, we are enabled to extract just relations of the manners and dispositions of the people.

As I have thus far entered on a subject which has occasionally engaged my attention, I will proceed a little farther, and recite a

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circumstance which may corroborate the position, that Hindoo women of distinction, by ancient as well as existing usage, were not debarred the sight of men. When a female of the chittery, or royal race, was marriageable, or supposed to possess a discriminating choice, she was conducted to an apartment where many youths of her own tribe were assembled; and, being desired to select from them her future husband, she distinguished the object of her partiality by throwing over his neck a wreath of flowers.*

THESE desultory opinions are freely given, and I am to intreat you will as freely review them; receiving such as may stand on principles of reason, and rejecting, without a scruple, those that seem vague or fanciful.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your's, &c.

* This custom, I am informed, has been observed within these late years at Tanjore.

END OF VOL. I.

A
JOURNEY
FROM
BENGAL TO ENGLAND,

THROUGH
THE NORTHERN PART OF INDIA,
KASHMIRE, AFGHANISTAN, AND PERSIA, AND
INTO RUSSIA, BY THE CASPIAN-SEA.

BY GEORGE FORSTER.

IN THE CIVIL SERVICE OF
THE HONOURABLE THE EAST-INDIA COMPANY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

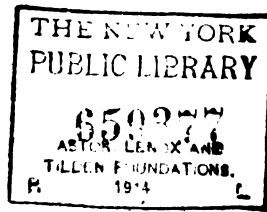
VOL. II.

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FORSTER'S TRAVELS.

LETTER XIII.

Kashmire, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

IT is now necessary to call your attention, already burthened, I fear, with no very pleasant matter, to the subject of Kashmire, and endeavour to describe the natural beauties of a valley, which perhaps, stands unparalleled for its air, soil, and a picturesque variety of landscape.

THE northern path of the Bannaul hill, mentioned in my last letter, is about one mile and a half shorter, than that of the southern side, not that this difference arises from the level of the low lands of Bannaul and Kashmire, but from the greater de-

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clivity of the southern face of the hill. Yet it is evident, from the precipitated current of the rivers of this quarter of India, that the valley of Kashmire is considerably more elevated than the Punjab plains. This height of situation, surrounded also by mountains, whose lofty summits are covered with snow, during a great part of the year, imparts a coldness to the air of Kashmire, which its immediate line of latitude would not otherwise possess.

VEERE NAUG was the first village we halted at, within the valley, where our party was strictly examined, but from the respect shewn by all classes of people to Zulphucar Khan, we were permitted to pass untaxed and unmolested. A rare usage at a Kashmirian custom-house! It should have been before noticed, that our patron, from the lameness of his hand and a general infirm state of body, was obliged to travel in a litter; a species of carriage different from any seen in the southern quarters of India. The frame of four slight pieces of wood, is about four feet and a half long, and three in breadth, with a bottom of cotton lacing or split canes interwoven. Two stout bamboo poles, project three-feet, from the end of the frame and are fastened to its outward sides, by iron rings. The extremities of these bamboos are loosely connected by folds of cords, into which is fixed, by closely twisting and binding at the centre, a thick pole, three feet long; and by these central poles, the litter, or as it is here called, the Sampan, is supported on the shoulders of four men. This conveyance you will see affords no shelter against any inclemency of
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of weather, which is braved at all seasons by these men of the mountains.

IN the passage of some of the steep hills the Khan was obliged to walk, and it seemed to me surprising, that the bearers were able to carry the litter over them. The Kashmirians, who are the ordinary travellers of this road, use sandals made of straw rope, as an approved defence of their feet, and to save their shoes. On leaving Sumboo, I had been advised to adopt this practice, but, my feet not being proof against the rough collision of the straw, I soon became lame and threw off my sandals. From a glaring deficiency of method, in the arrangement of my remarks, I am often fearful that but faint traces of a general chain will be exhibited. It is not that my ideas flow so thick and strong, as, in confidence of their superiour excellency, to condemn restriction or that obedience to order, which is so essential to their utility; it is an habit, perhaps an idle one, that impels me to note at the moment, the train of thoughts which occur; and it becomes necessary I see to plead this excuse, for having so abruptly dragged in the story of the khan's litter and my straw shoes, when I should have been laying before you sketches of this beautiful country, which, in the language of Persia, is called Kachmire be Nazeer.*

IN the vicinity of Veere Naug is seen a torrent of water bursting from the side of a mountain with impetuous force, and imme-

* Unequalled.

diately forming a considerable stream, * which contributes, with numerous other rivulets, to fertilize the valley of Kashmire. On the spot, where this piece of water reaches the plain, a bason of a square form has been constructed, it is said, by the emperor Jehanguir, for receiving and discharging the current; and the trees of various kinds, which overspread the borders of the bason, at once give an ornament to the scene, and a grateful shade to the inhabitants of that quarter, who, in the summer season, make it a place of common resort.

The road from Veere Naug leads through a country, exhibiting that store of luxuriant imagery, which is produced by a happy disposition of hill, dale, wood and water; and, that these rare excellencies of nature might be displayed in their full glory, it was the season of spring, when the trees, the apple, pear, the peach, apricot, the cherry and mulberry bore a variegated load of blossom. The clusters also, of the red and white rose, with an infinite class of flowering shrubs, presented a view so gayly decked, that no extraordinary warmth of imagination, was required to fancy that I stood, at least, on a province of fairy land. Except the mulberry, I do not believe that this country produces any species of the fruits of India, and but few of its vegetables; such is the change effected within a space of two degrees of latitude: this sudden revolution of climate cannot be

* It is called Vheit or Behat in the Kashmirian language, and in the Sanscrit, Vetustah.

ascribed

ascribed to the northern situation of Kashmire, which is little more than two hundred miles from Lahore, where, many of the fruits of southern India come to maturity, but to the surrounding snowy mountains, and an highly elevated land; which the Hindoos say, though very widely, is three perpendicular miles higher than the Punjab.

ON the 26th of April, at Durroo or Lurroo, a small but very populous town, seven cosses from Bannaul, where our khan and his suite were hospitably received by the chief, and lodged that night at his house. Our entertainment, and the cordial behaviour of the host, made us a general recompence for the fatigues of the journey; and I in an instant, forgot the pains of my bruised feet, in the pleasant comparison between a commodious shelter and the boisterous weather of the mountains.

ON the 27th, at Islaamabad, five cosses — a large town, situate on the north side of the river Jalum, which is here springing from the mountains, or penetrating them in narrow openings. At this place the Jalum, over which a wooden bridge is built, is about eighty yards across, and from the level surface of the country has a gentle current. Our party, this evening, hired a boat to proceed to the city, and had gone more than five miles, when a written order arrived, in an evil hour, requiring us to return and remain at Islaamabad, until a passport should be obtained from the court. This check infused a general gloom, and rendered our situation, already confined and irksome, almost comfortless. The boat, a very small one,

one, was scantily covered with a slender mat, and the wind, current, and a heavy rain had set in against us. The rain continued incessantly the whole night, and though my bedding was drenched with water, I received no injury from having lain on it several hours. After expressing my grateful acknowledgements to a hale constitution, I am induced to ascribe a great share of the prevention of sickness, on this as on other occasions to the frequent use of tobacco, which manifestly possesses the property of defending the body against the impression of damps and cold or impure air, which, from the thick ranges of wood and hills, is tainted with noxious vapours, produces fevers of a malignant kind, and I am prompted to attribute the good health I enjoyed in those parts, to the common habit of smoking tobacco.

Our party was greatly surprized at the receipt of this very unseasonable mandate, as we had during the day, occupied one of the most public places of the town, where most of the principal people visited Zulphucar Khan, supplied him with provisions, and were apprized of his intention to depart in the evening. But it had been issued I believe by the governor of the town, in resentment of the khan's not visiting him; and operated with a quick force, on the minds of all the men, and even the children of Islaamabad, who, but the short day before, from treating us with a studied kindness, would now pass our quarters without a notice. In every region of the earth, the loss of power, nay the trivial crosses of life, too often cause the desertion of those, whom the language of the world
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has entitled friends, but the averted looks of the prince are ever faithfully copied by the courtiers. The disgraced courtier of Asia, or he against whom the frown of the despot shall be pointed, becomes immediatly infected, and all men, by intuitive knowledge, it should seem, shun him. A retreat is rarely made by an Asiatic statesman, who usually closes his political career in a dungeon or on a scaffold.

IN Asia, the principles of justice, honor or patriotism, as they confer no substantial benefit, nor tend to elevate the character, are seldom seen to actuate the mind of the subject, who is constitutionally led to fix the tenure of life and property, and fame, on the will of his prince. Zulphucar Khan informs me, that the chief of Kashmire, though a youth, stands in the foremost rank of tyrants, and that the exactions of a Hindoo custom-house will be soon forgotten in the oppression of his government. The one, he said, affects a trifling portion of property, the other involves fortune and life.

Two or three days after our arrival at Islaamabad, the Dewan, or principal officer of the governor of Kashmire encamped in our vicinity, and being acquainted with Zulphucar Khan, obtained permission for the procedure of our party to the city. It is here necessary to observe, that no person, except by stealth, can enter or depart from Kashmire without an order, marked with the seal of government. The Dewan, attracted I suppose by the appearance of so white a person, made some enquiry into the nature of my occupation

pation and views. I told the old story of a turk travelling towards his country, with the addition, that to avoid the Sicque territory, I had taken the route of Kashmire, where I hoped to experience the benefit of his protection. My story was favourably heard, and I received a very cordial assurance of every necessary assistance. Our party being directed to attend the Dewan, and to form a part of his domestic suite, we proceeded by water, on the afternoon of the 3d of May, to Bhyteepour, nine cosses, a village situate on the northern bank of the Jalum, the evening was serene, and the variegated view of populous villages, interspersed through a plain which was waving with a rich harvest, and enlivened by the notes of a thousand birds, filled the mind with harmony and delight.

IN the vicinity of Bhyteepour are seen the remains of an Hindoo temple, which, though impaired by the ravages of time, and more by the destructive hand of the Mahometans, still bore evident marks of a superior taste and sculpture. Kashmire, having fallen a conquest to the followers of Mahomet, at an early period of their empire in India, when they furiously broke down every fence that barred the progress of their religion, felt the full force of a barbarous zeal; and its monuments of worship and taste were thrown to the ground in shapeless piles of ruin.

THE Dewan taking Zulphucar Khan with him, went, on the 5th of the month into the interior part of the country, and directed me to wait for him at the town of Pamper, ten miles further down the

the river, where an order was sent for my accommodation. This person of the Hindoo sect, possessed a more liberal disposition than is usually found in an Indian : though perhaps I am so much biassed by his indulgent treatment, that my opinion may be thought partial, but his deportment seemed uniformly benevolent to all classes of people ; with his companions he was affable and good humoured, he was humane to his domestics, and he exercised with a reasonable temperance the duties of his office.

ON the 7th, the Dewan came to Pamper, whence I went to the city, a distance of seven cosses in his boat, which, though in Kashmire was thought magnificent, would not have been disgraced in the station of a kitchen tender to a Bengal badgero. The boats of Kashmire are long and narrow, and are rowed with paddles : from the stern, which is a little elevated, to the centre, a tilt of mats is extended for the shelter of passengers or merchandize. The country being intersected with numerous streams, navigable for small vessels, great advantage and conveniency would arise to it from the water conveyance, especially in its interior commerce, did not the miserable policy of the Afghan government crush the spirit of the people.

THE city, which in the ancient annals of India was known by the name of Siringnaghur, but now by that of the province at large, extends about three miles on each side of the river Jalum, over which are four or five wooden bridges, and occupies

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in some part of its breadth, which is irregular, about two miles. The houses, many of them two and three stories high, are slightly built of brick and mortar, with a large intermixture of timber. On a standing roof of wood is laid a covering of fine earth, which shelters the building from the great quantity of snow that falls in the winter season. This fence communicates an equal warmth in winter, as a refreshing coolness in the summer season, when the tops of the houses, which are planted with a variety of flowers, exhibit at a distance the spacious view of a beautifully checquered parterre. The streets are narrow, and choaked with the filth of the inhabitants, who are proverbially unclean. No buildings are seen in this city worthy of remark; though the Kashmirians boast much of a wooden mosque, called the Jumah Muffid,* erected by one of the emperors of Hindostan; but its claim to distinction is very moderate.

THE subahdar, or governor of Kashmire, resides in a fortress called Shere Ghur, occupying the south-east quarter of the city, where most of his officers and troops are also quartered.

THE benefits which this city enjoys of a mild salubrious air, a river flowing through its centre, of many large and commodious houses, are essentially alloyed by its confined construction and the extreme filthiness of the people. The covered floating baths,

* Jumah is the sabbath of the Mahometans, and Muffid the name of a public place of worship. In pre-eminence, the principal place of prayer in Mahometan cities is termed Jumah Muffid.

which

which are ranged along the sides of the river, give the only testimony of conveniency or order; such baths are much wanted by the Indian Mahometans, who from the climate and their religion, are obliged to make frequent ablutions, and, in preventing the exposure of their women on these occasions, to adopt laborious precautions.

THE lake of Kashmire, or in the provincial language, the Dall, long celebrated for its beauties, and the pleasure it affords to the inhabitants of this country, extends from the north-east quarter of the city, in an oval circumference of five or six miles, and joins the Jalum by a narrow channel, near the suburbs. On the entrance to the eastward is seen a detached hill, on which some devout Mahometan has dedicated a temple to the great king Solomon, whose memory in Kashmire is held in profound veneration.

THE legends of the country assert, that Solomon visited this valley, and finding it covered, except the eminence now mentioned with a noxious water, which had no outlet, he opened a passage in the mountains, and gave to Kashmire its beautiful plains. The Tucht Suliman, the name bestowed by the Mahometans on the hill, forms one side of a grand portal to the lake, and on the other stands a lower hill, which, in the Hinduee is called Hirney Purvet, or the green hill, a name probably adopted from its being covered with gardens and orchards.

ON the summit of the Hirney Purvet, the Kashmirians have

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erected

erected a mosque to the honor of a Muckdoom Saheb, who is as famous in their tales, as Thomas-a-Becket in those of Canterbury. The men never undertake a business of moment without consulting Muckdoom Saheb; and when a Kashmirian woman wants a handsome husband or a chopping boy, she addresses her prayer to the ministers of this saint, who are said to seldom fail in gratifying her wish. The northern view of the lake is terminated at the distance of twelve miles, by a detached range of mountains, which slope from the centre to each angle; and from the base, a spacious plain, preserved in constant verdure by numerous streams, extends with an easy declivity to the margin of the water.

In the centre of the plain, as it approaches the lake, one of the Dehli emperors, I believe Shah Jehan, constructed a spacious garden, called the Shalimar, which is abundantly stored with fruit-trees and flowering shrubs. Some of the rivulets which intersect the plain, are led into a canal at the back of the garden, and flowing through its centre, or occasionally thrown into a variety of water-works, compose the chief beauty of the Shalimar. To decorate this spot, the Mogul princes of India have displayed an equal magnificence and taste; especially Jehan Gheer, who, with the enchanting Noor Mahl, made Kashmire his usual residence during the summer months, and largely contributed to improve its natural advantages. On arches thrown over the canal, are erected at equal distances, four or five suites of apartments, each consisting of a saloon, with four rooms at the angles, where

where the followers of the court attend, and the servants prepare sherbets, coffee, and the Hookah. The frame of the doors of the principal saloon, is composed of pieces of a stone of a black colour, streaked with yellow lines, and of a closer grain and higher polish than porphyry. They were taken, it is said, from an Hindoo temple, by one of the Mogul princes, and esteemed of great value.

THE canal of the Shalimar is constructed of masonry as far as the lower pavillion, from whence the stream is conveyed through a bed of earth, in the centre of an avenue of spreading trees, to the lake, which, with other streams of a lesser note, it supplies and refreshes. The other sides of the lake are occupied by gardens of an inferior description; though two of them, the property of the government, deserve a distinct notice for their size and pleasant appearance; the Baugh Nussiem lying on the north-west, and the Baugh Nishat on the south-east quarter of the Shalimar. The numerous small islands emerging from the lake, have also a happy effect in ornamenting the scene. One of a square form is called the Char Chinaur,* from having at each of the angles a plane-tree; but one of them, and a pavillion that was erected in the centre, has gone to decay, as have all their monuments of the Moguls, except the Shalimar, which is preserved in good order, and is often visited by the governor, whom I have seen there, with

* The oriental plane.

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his officers and the principal inhabitants of the city. Since the dismemberment of Kashmire from the empire of Hindostan, it has been subject to the Afghans,* who possessing neither the genius nor liberality of the Moguls, have suffered its elegant structures to crumble into ruins, and to hold out against them a severe testimony of the barbarity of their nation.

AMIR KHAN, a Persian, one of the late governors of Kashmire, erected a fortified palace on the eastern side of the lake; but the materials have been so unsubstantial, that though of not more than eight years standing, it cannot now with safety be inhabited. He used to pass much of his time in this retreat, which was curiously adapted to the enjoyment of the various species of Asiatic luxury; and he is still spoken of in terms of affection and regret; for, like them, he was gay, voluptuous, and much addicted to the pleasures of the table. There is not a boatman or his wife that does not speak of this Khan with rapture, and ascribe to him a once abundant livelihood. This governor like many of his predecessors, trusting in the natural strength of the province, and its distance from the capital, rebelled against his master.† The force sent against him was small and ill appointed, and might have been easily repelled by a few resolute men stationed in the passes. But in the hour of need, he was abandoned by

* This event probably happened about the year 1754.

† Timur Shah, the reigning emperor of the Afghans.

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the pusillanimous fickle Kashmirians, who reconciled their conduct to the Persian, by urging, that if he had remained in Kashmire, he would have converted them all to the faith of Ali and cut them off from the hope of salvation. A Kashmirian must have been grievously embarrassed to justify his conduct, when he ascribed it to any principle of religion; for he is a Hindoo, a Mahometan, and would become a Christian if a priest were at hand, according to the fashion or interest of the day.

THE environs of the town, to the east and west, are laid out in private gardens, which, skirting the banks of the Jalam, or supplied with canals from the lake, afford a various retreat of pleasure to the inhabitants. The plane-tree, that species termed the *Platanus Orientalis*, is commonly cultivated in Kashmire, where it is said to arrive at a greater perfection than in other countries. This tree, which in most parts of Asia is called the Chinaur, grows to the size of an oak, and has a taper straight trunk, with a silver coloured bark; and its leaf, not unlike an expanded hand, is of a pale green. When in full foliage, it has a grand and beautiful appearance, and in the hot weather, it affords a refreshing shade. But I may venture to class in the first rank of vegetable produce, the rose of Kashmire, which, for its brilliancy and delicate ~~at~~ odour, has long been proverbial in the east; and its essential oil or ottar is held in universal estimation. The season, when the rose first opens into blossom, is celebrated with much festivity by
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the Kashmirians, who resort in crowds to the adjacent gardens, and enter into scenes of gaiety and pleasure, rarely known among other Asiatic nations. There, all that exterior gravity which constitutes a grand part of the Mahometan character, is thrown aside; and the Turk, Arab, and Persian, as if fatigued with exhibiting the serious and guarded deportment of their own country, give a licentious scope to their passions.

THE valley of Kashmire is of an elliptick form, and extends about ninety miles in a winding direction from the south-east to the north-west. It widens gradually to Ilaamabad, where the breadth is about forty miles, which is continued with little variation to the town of Sampre,* whence the mountains by a regular inclination to the westward, come to a point, and divide Kashmire from the territory of Muzzufferabad. To the north and north-east, Kashmire is bounded by what is here termed the mountains of Thibet; a branch, I apprehend, of that immense range, which rising near the black sea, penetrates through Armenia, and skirting the south shore of the Caspian, extends through the north-east provinces of Persia, to Thibet and China. On the south-east and south, it is bounded by Kishtewar, and on the south-west and west, by Prounce,† Muzzufferabad and some other independent districts.

* About twenty-five miles to the westward of the city.

† Through this district lies the pass of Bember, minutely described by Bernier.

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THE Jalum, the western of the Punjab rivers, having received the numerous rivulets of the valley, and the overflowing water of the lakes, becomes a spacious stream, and is discharged through the mountains near the town of Baramoulah, where its current, from the declivity of the land, runs with rapid force.* At Baramoulah the Kashmirians say Solomon rent the mountains, and gave a passage to the waters, which, from the beginning of time had floated on their plains.

ABOUT eight miles to the westward of the city, the Jalum is joined by a small river called the Chote, or little Scind, which I was informed by a Kashmirian Pundit, arises in the Thibet mountains, and is the only stream not produced within the valley. Previously to the Mahometan conquest of India, Kashmire was celebrated for the learning of its Bramins and the magnificent construction of its temple. The period of its subjection to the Mahometans, is not recorded in any history that I have seen, but we may believe, that a country, containing a valuable commerce and a profusion of natural beauties, would at an early date have attracted their notice and invited their conquest. It was governed in a long series of succession, by a race of Tartar princes, of the Chug or Chugatay tribe, until the year 1586, when Acbar subdued it: aided more, it is said, by intrigue, than the force of his arms. Kashmire remained annexed to the house of Timur for

* See Bernier.

the space of one hundred and sixty years, after which it was betrayed by the Mogul governor, to Ahmed Shah Duranny, who formed it into a province of the Afghan empire.

THE valley of Kashmire has generally a flat surface, and being copiously watered, yields abundant crops of rice, which is the common food of the inhabitants. At the base of the surrounding hills, where the land is higher, wheat, barley and various other grains are cultivated. A superior species of saffron is also produced in this province, and iron of an excellent quality is found in the adjacent mountains. But the wealth and fame of Kashmire have largely arisen from the manufacture of shauls, which it holds unrivalled, and almost without participation. The wool of the shaul is not produced in the country, but brought from districts of Thibet, lying at the distance of a month's journey to the north-east. It is originally of a dark grey colour, and is bleached in Kashmire by the help of a certain preparation of rice flour. The yarn of this wool is stained with such colours as may be judged the best suited for sale, and after being woven the piece is once washed. The border, which usually displays a variety of figures and colours is attached to the shauls, after fabrication; but in so nice a manner, that the junction is not discernable. The texture of the shaul resembles that of the shaloon of Europe, to which it has probably communicated the name. The price, at the loom, of an ordinary shaul, is eight rupees, thence in proportional quality, it produces from fifteen to twenty; and I have seen a very fine

fine piece sold at forty rupees the first cost. But the value of this commodity may be largely enhanced by the introduction of flowered work; and when you are informed that the sum of one hundred rupees is occasionally given for a shawl to the weaver, the half amount may be fairly ascribed to the ornaments.

A PORTION of the revenue of Kashmire is transmitted to the Afghan capital in shawl goods, which I had an opportunity of seeing previously to the dispatch, and from the information then received, I am reasonably confirmed in the accuracy of this statement I have given. The shawls usually consist of three sizes, two of which, the long and the small square one, are in common use in India; the other long and very narrow, with a large mixture of black colour in it, is worn as a girdle by the northern Asiatics.

A WINE is made in Kashmire, resembling that of Madeira, which, if skilfully manufactured by age, would possess an excellent quality. A spirituous liquor is also distilled from the grape, in which and the wine, the people of all kinds freely indulge.

THE Kashmirians fabricate the best writing paper of the east, which was formerly an article of extensive traffic; as were its lacquer ware, cutlery and sugars; * and the quality of these manufactures clearly evince, that were the inhabitants governed by wise and liberal princes, there are few attainments of art which they

* The raw sugar is imported from the Punjab.

would not acquire. But the heavy oppressions of the government, and the rapacious temper of the bordering states, who exercise an unremitting rapacity on the foreign traders, and often plunder whole cargoes, have reduced the commerce of Kashmire to a declining and languid state. In proof of this position, the Kashmirians say, that during their subjection to the Mogul dominion, the province contained forty thousand shawl looms, and that at this day, there are not sixteen thousand. In Kashmire are seen merchants and commercial agents of most of the principal cities of northern India, also of Tartary, Persia and Turkey, who at the same time advance their fortunes, and enjoy the pleasures of a fine climate and a country, over which are profusely spread the various beauties of nature.

THE dress of the Kashmirians consists of a large turban, awkwardly put on ; a great woollen vest with wide sleeves ; and a sack, wrapped in many folds round the middle ; under the vest, which may be properly called a wrapper, the higher class of people wear a pirahun or shirt, and drawers ; but the lower order have no under garment, nor do they even gird up their loins. On first seeing these people in their own country, I imagined from their garb, the cast of countenance, which is long and of a grave aspect, and the form of their beards, that I had come amongst a nation of Jews. The same idea impressed also Mr. Bernier, who carrying it further, has attempted, by the aid of some proofs more specious than substantial, to deduce their origin

origin from the Jewish tribes that were carried into captivity.

THE dress of the women is no less awkward than that of the men, and is ill adapted to display the beauties they naturally possess. Their outward, and often only garment is of cotton, and shaped like a long loose shirt. Over the hair, which falls in a single braid, they wear a close cap, usually of a woollen cloth of a crimson colour; and to the hinder part of it is attached a triangular piece of the same stuff, which falling on the back conceals much of the hair. Around the lower edge of the cap is rolled a small turban, fastened behind with a short knot, which seemed to me the only artificial ornament about them. You will be pleased to notice, that I speak of the dress of the ordinary women, such only being permitted to appear in public. The women of the higher classes are never seen abroad; nor is it consistent with the usage of any Mahometan nation even to speak of the female part of a family.

THE Kashmirians are stout, well formed, and as the natives of a country lying in the thirty-fourth degree of latitude, may be termed a fair people, and their women in southern France or Spain would be called Brunettes. But having been prepossessed with an opinion of their charms, I suffered a sensible disappointment; though I saw some of the female dancers most celebrated for beauty and the attractions of their profession. A coarseness of figure generally prevails among them, with broad features, and they too often have thick legs. Though excelling in the colour of their
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complexion, they are evidently surpassed by the elegant form and pleasing countenance of the women of some of the western provinces of India.

THE city of Kashmire once abounded with courtezans, equally gay and affluent; but the rigorous contributions of the Afghans have greatly reduced their number, and driven most of those that remain into a languid poverty. The few that I saw, afforded me much pleasure by their graceful skill in dancing, and voices peculiarly melodious. And here let me observe, lest I should afterwards forget, that the women of Kashmire are singularly fruitful, be the government ever so oppressive, or fortune at all points adverse, no baneful effects are seen to operate on the propagation of the species, which is maintained with a successful perseverance. I will not presume to investigate the physical cause of a virtue so copiously inherent in the men and women of this country, but will simply intimate to you that its waters are well stored with fish, which is thought to be a generative stimulus, and constitutes a principal article of the food of the people.

THE language of Kashmire evidently springs from the Sanscrit stock, and resembles in sound, that of the Mahrattas, though with more harshness, which has probably induced the inhabitants to compose their songs in the Persic, or adopt those of the Persian poets. Yet in despite of the unpleasant tone of their speech, there is scarcely a person in the country, from youth to old age, who has not a taste for music.

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THE Kashmirians are gay and lively people, with strong propensities to pleasure. None are more eager in the pursuit of wealth, have more inventive faculties in acquiring it, or who devise more modes of luxurious expense. When a Kashmirian, even of the lowest order, finds himself in the possession of ten shillings, he loses no time in assembling his party, and launching into the lake, solaces himself till the last farthing is spent. Nor can the despotism of an Afghan government, which loads them with a various oppression and cruelty, eradicate this strong tendency to dissipation, yet their manners, it is said, have undergone a manifest change, since the dismemberment of their country from Hindostan. Encouraged by the liberality and indulgence of the Moguls, they gave a loose to their pleasures and the bent of their genius. They appeared in gay apparel, constructed costly buildings, and were much addicted to the pleasures of the table. The interests of this province were so strongly favored at the court, that every complaint against its governors was attentively listened to, and any attempt to molest the people, restrained or punished.

In the reign of Aurungzebe, when the revenue of the different portions of the empire exceeded that of the present day, the sum collected in Kashmire amounted to three and a half lacks of rupees, but at this time, not less than twenty lacks are extracted by the Afghan governor, who, if his tribute be regularly remitted to court, is allowed to execute with impunity every act of violence. This extreme rigour has sensibly affected the deportment and man-

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ners of the Kashmirians, who shrink with dread from the Afghan oppressions, and are fearful of making any display of opulence. A Georgian merchant, who had long resided in the country, gave me the most satisfactory information of Kashmire. He said, that when he first visited the province, which was governed by a person of a moderate disposition, the people were licentious, volatile and profuse. But, that since the administration of the late chief, an Afghan of a fierce and rapacious temper, they had become dispirited, their way of living mean, their dress slovenly, and though of a temper proverbially loquacious, they were averse from communicating ordinary intelligence.

DURING my residence in Kashmire, I often witnessed the harsh treatment which the common people received at the hands of their masters, who rarely issued an order without a blow of the side of their hatchet, a common weapon of the Afghans, and used by them in war, as a battle-axe. Though the inhabitants of this province are held under a grievous subjection, and endure evils the most mortifying to human nature, being equally oppressed and insulted, the various testimonies brought home to me of their common depravity of disposition, made me the less sensible of their distress; and in a short time so faint was the trace of it on my mind, that I even judged them worthy of their adverse fortune.

In viewing the manners of a people at large, it were at once a sacrifice of truth and every claim to historical merit, to introduce
passionate

passionate or fanciful colouring; yet the coolest reflection does not withhold me from saying, that I never knew a national body of men more impregnated with the principles of vice, than the natives of Kashmire. The character of a Kashmirian is conspicuously seen, when invested with official power. Supported by an authority which prescribes no limits to its agents, in the accumulation of public emoluments, the Kashmirian displays the genuine composition of his mind. He becomes intent on immediate aggrandizement, without rejecting any instrument which can promote his purpose. Rapacious and arrogant, he evinces in all his actions, deceit, treachery, and that species of refined cruelty, which usually actuates the conduct of a coward. And it is said, that he is equally fickle in his connections, as implacable in enmity. In behalf of humanity, I could wish not to have been capacitated to exhibit so disgusting a picture, which being constantly held out to me for near three months, in various lights, but with little relief, impressed me with a general dislike of mankind.

THE Kashmirians are so whimsically curious, that when any trivial question is proposed to them, its intention and purpose is enquired into with a string of futile interrogatories, before the necessary information is given; and a shopkeeper rarely acknowledges the possession of a commodity, until he is apprized of the quantity required. In examining the situation in which these people have been placed, with its train of relative effects, the speculative moralist will perhaps discover one of the larger sources,

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from whence this cast of manners and disposition has arisen. He will perceive that the singular position of their country, its abundant and valuable produce, with a happy climate, tend to excite strong inclinations to luxury and effeminate pleasures; and he is aware, that to counteract causes, naturally tending to enervate and corrupt the mind, a system of religion or morality is necessary to inculcate the love of virtue, and especially, to impress the youth with early sentiments of justice and humanity. But he will evidently see, that neither the religious or the moral precepts of the present race of Mahometans contain the principles of rectitude or philanthropy; that on the contrary, they are taught to look with abhorrence on the fairest portion of the globe, and to persecute and injure those who are not inclosed in the fold of their prophet. Seeing then the Kashmirians, presiding as it were at the fountain head of pleasure, neither guided or checked by any principle or example of virtue, he will not be surprized, that they give a wide scope to the passions of the mind and the enjoyments of the body.

AZAD KHAN, the present governor of Kashmire, of the Afghan tribe, succeeded his father Hadji * Kareem Dad, a domestic officer of Ahmed Shah Duranny, and who was, at the death of that prince, advanced to the government of Kashmire, by Timur Shah, as a reward for quelling the rebellion of the Amir Khan,

* Those who have made the pilgrimage of Mecca are termed Hadji.

who

who has been already mentioned. Though the Kashmirians exclaim with bitterness at the administration of Hadji Kareem Dad, who was notorious for his wanton cruelties and insatiable avarice; often for trivial offences, throwing the inhabitants, tied by the back in pairs, into the river, plundering their property, and forcing their women of every description; yet they say, he was a systematic tyrant, and attained his purposes, however atrocious, through a fixed medium. They hold a different language in speaking of the son, whom they denominate the Zaulim Kham, a Persian phrase which expresses a tyrant without discernment; and if the smaller portion of the charges against him are true, the appellation is fitly bestowed. At the age of eighteen years; he has few of the vices of youth; he is not addicted to the pleasures of the haram, nor to wine: he does not even smoke the Hookah. But his acts of ferocity exceed common belief; they would seem to originate in the wildest caprice, and to display a temper rarely seen in the nature of man.

THAT you may form some specific knowledge of the character of this, let me call him, infernal despot, I will mention some facts which were communicated during my residence in the province. While he was passing with his court, under one of the wooden bridges of the city, on which a crowd of people had assembled to observe the procession, he levelled his musquet at an opening which he saw in the path way, and being an expert marksman, he shot to death an unfortunate spectator. Soon after his accession to the

government, he accused his mother of infidelity to her husband, and in defiance of the glaring absurdity which appeared in the allegation, as well as the anxious intreaties of the woman who had borne him to save her from shame, she was ignominiously driven from the palace; and about the same time, on a like frivolous pretence, he put one of his wives to death. A film on one of his eyes had baffled the attempts of many operators, and being impatient at the want of success, he told the last surgeon who had been called in, that if the disorder was not remedied within a limited time, allowing but a few days, his belly should be cut open; the man failed in the cure, and Azad Khan verified his threat.

THESE passages were related to me by different persons, some strangers in the country, others, who from the stations they held, would rather have been induced to speak favourably. Azad Khan had, in the three first months of his government, become an object of such terror to the Kashmirians, that the casual mention of his name produced an instant horror and an involuntary supplication of the aid of their prophet. Among the lesser order of his exactions, but which seemed to me the most unpopular and discouraging, is that levied from the courtezans or dancing girls, who are obliged to account for every sum of money they receive, and to pay the larger share of it to the intendant of the police; nor are they allowed to attend at any festival or entertainment, without the permission of that officer.

officer. The rigorous treatment of this class of females, which are ever the most pleasing to society from the indulgence granted to them, has here effected a grievous change; for though Kashmire is known to abound in fine women, few are now seen among the courtezans.

A REVENUE of between twenty and thirty lacks of rupees is collected from this province, of which a tribute of seven lacks is remitted to the treasury of Timur Shah. The army of Kashmire, a part of which I have seen embodied, consists of about three thousand horse and foot, chiefly Afghans,* who had received little pay for two years, and many of them, for want of a better subsistence, were obliged to live on the Kernel of the Singerah,† or water-nut, which is plentifully produced in the lakes of the country.

IN noticing the character of the governor of Kashmire, which is composed of little else than a blind destructive cruelty, you

* The natives of this province are rarely seen engaged in a military occupation, from which their genius seems averse; and it is held an established rule in the Afghan government, to refuse the admittance of a Kashmirian into their army. The common people usually carry abroad with them in the winter season an earthen stove, which hanging near the thigh, gives it a scorched appearance; and by this mark a Kashmirian is discovered, should he by stealth endeavour to enlist. The sling, in the use of which they are expert, seems to be their favourite weapon, and enables them with little variation to oppose an adversary at a distance, and from places of security.

† The Singerah also constitutes a great portion of the food of the lower class of the natives, and the exclusive privilege of vending it, yields annually about twelve thousand pounds to the government.

will

will be surprized that he is not punished or restrained by the court. But when it is considered that the approach to this remote province, leads through hostile or independant territories, that Timur Shah is equally withheld from distant enterprize by the accumulated arrears and consequent weakness of his army, to which may be added the fear of domestic treason, and a native indolence of temper, a sufficient cause will be seen for his passive regard to the interiour government of Kashmire. Contenting himself with the tribute, he is seldom disposed to controul the conduct of a remote governor. I am to express a regret, that previously to my route, I had not perused the accurate and candid memoirs of Mr. Bernier, who stands in the first rank of writers on Indian history: yet, should this cursory relation throw any light on his description of Kashmire, as lively as it is just, by filling up a chasm, or marking the changes which have happened since his day, I shall hold it in some estimation, and consider any inconveniency which might have arisen from my journey thither, honorably requited. Mr. Bernier enjoyed advantages which have fallen to the lot of few Asiatic travellers, and fortunately for the learned world, his talents amply improved them. He travelled into Kashmire in the suite of Danishmund Khan, a favourite Omrah of Aurungzebe, who having a taste for science and letters, encouraged this ingenious Frenchman to attentively investigate the great variety of its curious produce. He has also described the causes of that important revolution, which raised Aurungzebe to the throne of Hindostan.

As

As he was personally engaged in the scene of action, and an eye witness of many of the principal events, all which are related in a simple interesting language, I earnestly recommend to you a diligent perusal of his instructive and judicious book. This writer having chiefly associated with Mahometans, who invariably possess an absolute abhorrence of the religion of the Hindoos, and being destitute of the proper documents for the research, he has not been equally successful in his explanation of the principles and spirit of the Hindoo doctrines, and it is only in that discussion I presume to doubt the opinions of Mr. Bernier. After closing this dissertation on Kashmire, you must permit me to relate my desultory adventures in that country.

On my arrival at the city, I was accommodated with an apartment in the house of Zulphucar Khan, and seeing him of so respectable a character, and disposed to do me kindness, I had resolved to remain there, but my servant, the same person who had set upon me at Jumbo, discovered me to the family to whom he knew I had brought introductory letters, and being urgently pressed, not to say pestered, to lodge at the house of a Sheikh Mirza, the brother of my Jumbo host, I was forced out of the friendly roof of the Khan, whom I shall ever remember with affection and esteem. His father having filled high stations in the upper part of India, at the period of the Afghan and Sicque invasions, Zulphucar Khan, who was himself present at some of the actions, had acquired a conversant knowledge of the motives that
acted

actuated the different parties; and his remarks on the various events of those times, from which I derived much useful information, denoted a sound discerning judgement, little heated by prejudice, or fettered by those narrow precepts which usually sway the mind of a Mahometan. He strictly observed the ceremonies of his religion, which were performed with an apparent conviction of their rectitude; and, though he daily saw my remission of the customary worship of his family, he neither remarked or censured it.

At Sheikh Mirza's, I was received with splendid offers of friendship, and all that farrago of protestation, the common burthen of Asiatic language, which goes for nothing. The truth was, the brother at Jumbo had represented me as a wealthy merchant who would produce great profit to the house; and this object deluged me at the first meeting with compliments, which commenced with embracing my legs, and ended in washing my beard in rose water. Nor did he cease to load me with a series of disgusting attentions, until I told him that my business obliged me to proceed, without delay, to Kabul. The arrival of a merchant from Constantinople compleated my relief; for then the Sheikh had no leisure to say a civil word to any one, and seeing indeed, that my residence promised no emolument to the house, he would without ceremony have turned me out of it, had another Turk appeared.

As there are no karavanferas in Kashmire, commercial strangers

gers are lodged with their brokers, who finding an account in affording such accommodation, are generally possessed of large and convenient habitations. A Georgian, who occupied the room next to mine, and was a very agreeable neighbour, did not, I observed, give a ready credit to my story, which he cross examined with some tokens of suspicion; and one day, having desired to look at my head, he decidedly, pronounced it to be that of a christian. But he became alarmed, when I cautioned him, in a serious tone, to be less hasty in forming so dangerous an opinion; for he must know, that to bestow such an appellation * on a believer of the true faith, was a grievous offence in a Mahometan country. In a future conversation with the Georgian, he explained to me, and proved by comparison, that the head of a Christian is broad behind and flatted out at the crown; that a Mahometan's head grows narrow at the top, and like a monkies has a conic form. This Georgian was associated in trade with one of his countrymen then residing at Benares, and seeing that he viewed me with mistrust, the communication of which must have had mischievous effects, I judged it prudent to disclose my true story; premising, with an assurance, that should treachery or his indiscretion bring on me any mischance, his estate at Benares would become forfeit, and the person of his companion exposed to punishment. This

* Nazarene is a term of bitter reproach among the northern Mahometans.

language, supported by a disposition naturally honourable, ensured his zealous attachment, from which I derived many uses, during my stay in Kashmire.

THE Dewan, whom I daily attended, still continued his former kindness, and agreeably to his promise, solicited for me the governor's permission to leave the province. The memorial presented by the Dewan, set forth, that a Turk who had come from Hindostan, was desirous of passing, with two domestics, through Kashmire, in his way to Constantinople. When this purport was made known to me, I strongly feared its failure; for strangers rarely visit Kashmire for the purpose of curiosity or amusement, and as no specific occupation was ascribed to me, I observed to the Dewan that a refusal might be expected. The apprehension was wholly verified in Azad Khan's saying, that the Turks were good soldiers, which he then wanted, and that he would employ me in his army. It was in vain the Dewan represented the solicitude of visiting my country, whence I had been long absent, and that little benefit would accrue from the services of a person under such constraint. He forbade the Hindoo, in a voice that made him tremble, to cease from urging the request, for he had formed an ultimate resolution.

WHEN the Dewan intimated to me the information, I noticed an evident agitation in his countenance; and though you may suppose that my mind was ill at ease, I forced upon myself that

that species of resignation which is habitual to an Asiatic in his day of trouble, and gravely affected to administer a comfort to the Dewan, which was more wanting to myself. From that moment, I never saw him,* nor did I ever impart to any one the story of my failure, well knowing, that had it become public, no one would have dared to have given me assistance or even shelter.

On revolving the different modes of extrication from this dilemma, I bethought myself of the Banker, on whom I had brought a draft from Jumbo; and in the course of a day or two I applied to him for a passport. He very frankly assured me of his services, from which, as he was at that time high in the estimation of the governor, I entertained sanguine hopes of success, and to obviate the risque that might arise from the name of Khuroe, which had been inserted in the former memorial, I now took that of Eufuff, a Mahometan merchant, going on a commercial adventure to Peshour. But on the day when the passport was to have been issued, as if my evil star had determined to rule, the banker fell under the displeasure of the despot, which so wholly deranged him, that my business no longer occupied his thoughts. He had been solicited to advance a considerable loan to the government, but aware of the risque of such a negociation, he pleaded inability, and the last time I went

* This unfortunate man was I understand, afterwards put to death by Azad Khan, in one of his many moments of capricious cruelty.

to his house, he was trembling in an agony of fear, from an apprehension of Azad Khan's resentment.*

IN treating of the government of Kashmire, I omitted to mention, that it had not hitherto extended its apprehension to merchants, who, from the wealth which they introduced into the province, were respected and even indulged. The obstacles that stood in the way of my departure, now became serious, and gave me much anxiety. I was thrown into the power of a capricious tyrant, under a semblance also, which if discovered, might be fatal, and I was precluded by the late occurrence, from a personal application to the court. Endeavouring to remove the appearance of chagrin, I intreated the Georgian, who has been mentioned, to expedite my departure, though without communicating any part of the former failures. Only observing that the multiplicity of business, necessarily engrossing the attention of the dewan, of whose friendship for me he had been apprised prevented me from giving him further trouble. The business was undertaken with a zealous alacrity, and by an unremitted attendance of fifteen days, aided by a small bribe, was accomplished. Having hired a horse from a native of Peshour, who was returning to that city, and taken into my service a Persian boy, on the 11th of June I left Kashmire and my honest Georgian friend.

THE river Jalum, at the distance of ten miles from the

He was, at a future period, I am informed, put to death by the Afghan.

city,

city, is formed by the hollow surface of the country, into a sheet of water, of seven or eight miles in circumference, called in the Kashmirian language, the Wuller, which has a gentle southern current, and is gradually contracted as the land rises.

ON the morning of the 12th, arrived at Sompre, nine coffes, a populous town on the eastern side of the Jalum, where the passport was deposited and another issued. After a halt of three hours, which were chiefly employed in repairing the riding tackle, which was all of cordage, bridle, stirrups and girth, I proceeded in company with Mohubullah, the proprietor of the steed, and Huffin, the Persian boy, to the small village of Markore, a stage of ten coffes. Mohubullah made a good travelling pillow, of which the bones were picked, and pluming myself on having outwitted the governor of Kashmire, I went to sleep in an adjacent mosque with a light heart.

ON the 13th, at Hourree Dana, four coffes, an hamlet, situate three miles within the boundary of the province. The night being cool, I had thrown over my bed-cloths a coat, in the pocket of which was deposited the passport; when, in an evil hour, just as I was beginning to awake, a thief snatched my coat, and made his escape. Had the coat been of any other colour than red, it would not, I believe, have attracted the marauder's notice; but a spark of vanity, many of which have lighted me into scenes of trouble, prompted the purchase of this gaudy garment, which before had
been

been often stared at. I mentioned to the officer in charge of the pass at the boundary, the affair of the theft and the loss of the passport, to the truth of which Mohubullah bore testimony, adding that I was Seid, and it was well known the Seids, never uttered a falsity; Huffin also swore by the beard of his father to the truth of the fact. The officer who was a Kashmirian heard the story, with a grave countenance, and looking as if he did not believe a word of it, said that I must procure another passport. Seeing that words made no impression on this vigilant guardian of his post, (which it would have surprised me, if they had.) I secretly, tendered him a few rupees,* for his good will. The sight of the money produced an immediate effect on every feature of his face, which softening into a smile of compliance, I moved on.—Our party had not preceded three hundred yards, when, four men were perceived running after us with great speed and, in a loud voice, ordering us to halt. On coming up they seized me, alledging I was a state criminal, whom they were directed to convey to the city; nor did I escape from their hands, until I had applied the argument, which had before opened the gate, but to a much larger amount.—Huffin, who had seen the

* The Rupee is the current coin of Kashmire, and that struck at Moradabad in Rohilcund, is held in the greatest estimation. From the baseness of the silver a large discount is allowed on that of Kashmire. Copper money of the value of a halfpenny and cowreys, a small marine shell, compose the other currency of this province.

pass-

passport and witnessed the theft, expressed astonishment at the largeness of the sum, and accused me of extravagant folly. But, he did not know the cause of my aversion to a public examination.

On the 14th, at Doumbah, fifteen cosses, a small village dependant on the chief of Muzzufferabad. The limit of Kashmire on this quarter is terminated by a low thick wood, the edge of which is skirted by a rivulet, and, on the other side rises a lofty chain of mountains, stretching to the north and south, whose summits are in some parts, now, covered with snow, a deep tract of which I crossed. The inhabitants of the Muzzufferabad districts, denominated Bombaus, are Mahometans of the Afghan tribe and inimical to the Kashmirians, who, under the father of the present governor, had laid their territory waste. The rumour of another invasion prevailing, at this time, I was strictly examined, but the management of Mohubullah, with a small donation, gave us an unmolested progress. The face of the country exhibits a continued view of mountains, on the side of which are seen patches of cultivated ground and scattered hamlets of three or four cottages.

On the 15th, at Nousere, twelve cosses, part of the road bended over the brow of a steep and craggy mountain, at the foot of which, a river, which here, takes the name of Muzzufferabad,* runs with extreme rapidity; and breaks upon the numerous insulated rocks that interrupt its passage, with a noise of thunder.

* The proper name of this river is the Kishen Gunga.

ON

ON the 16th, at Paunch-Graum, six coffes, the road was still more difficult of passage than that of yesterday. The mountain being in some places so steep, that projecting beams are fixed, into its side, to support a path of planks, for the accommodation of foot passengers; horses are sent by another tract. This path hath been lately repaired, out of the savings of charity, by a Mahometan mendicant, who had, also, in a recess of the hill, erected a small building for the refreshment of travellers. It being one of these few acts of public benefit, within the compass of my knowledge, performed, by this class of men, I deem the communication a matter of conscience; for, too frequent occasions of reprobating them have already offered.

ON the 17th, at Muzzufferabad, ten coffes, a town standing on the eastern bank of the Kishen Gunga,* small, but populous, and the residence of a chief entitled Sultan Mahmoud, who after dividing the greatest portion of his territory among the younger branches of his family, reserved this town, with a district yielding about a lack of rupees, for his private maintenance.

ON the morning of the 18th, I crossed the river, and joined a shaul kafilah proceeding to Peshour. A ferry boat used at this

* The Kishen Gunga runs here, to the left, with a course nearly south-west and falls, I was informed, into the Jalum, among the mountains, at the head of the Punjab. I saw many people cross this river, on an inflated sheep or dog's skin, which, supporting the head and breast of the passenger, is impelled and guided by the motion of his legs.

place,

place, is frequently, by the violence of the current and a rocky shore, dashed to pieces; And being now, in this state, I passed over, tho' with much difficulty, a bridge of ropes, about 100 yards in length. A stout rope, fastened to wooden posts, on either shore, has attached to it, a certain number of carved pieces of wood in the form of oxen yokes, with the forks placed vertically; and, the sides of the yokes being embraced by smaller ropes, afford a hold to the passengers.—The road from the limit of Kashmire to Muzzufferabad tends to the south-west and leads over a country, covered with mountains, which are thinly intersected with abrupt valleys.

ON the 18th, halted at a mosque, on the western side of Kishen Gunga.

ON the 19th, the kafilah proceeded a cofs inland from the river. The heat of the weather during the day, and the remains of a sickness had so enervated me, that I could not walk a few paces, without extreme pain and lassitude. But, my little wants were, readily, supplied by Mohubullah, who procured good provisions, cooked them, and was my pipe bearer.

On the 20th, at Dunnee, three cosses, a small village, on the eastern bank of the Nhah, a narrow rapid river, which falls into the Kishen Gunga. The kafilah remained at this place, until the inhabitants had constructed a bridge, which consisted of two entire beams, at the distance of three feet asunder, with an interstice of planks, fastened by cordage. The performance of this work, a very

tedious one, was chiefly expedited by Sultan Mahmoud, in person, who, though an old man, shewed a persevering activity with a great share of good temper. The materials of the bridge, which had been floated from some distance, having, by the force of the current, been carried below the proper station, we were detained at Dunnee for another supply of wood, until the 28th, when we moved three coffes, and halted in an uninhabited valley.

ON the 29th, on the summit of a mountain, ten coffes, in the districts of Jidoon, governed by a Patan chief. In a steep part of this hill, where the path, from some rain that had fallen, was slippery, my horse stumbled; and had not a tree been within reach, a branch of which I caught, I must have been thrown down a lofty declivity. This night I experienced some of those inconveniencies to which travellers of my description are occasionally subject. My baggage was thoroughly soaked by the rain; and water, which had already so much annoyed me, was not to be found, nor a stick of fuel. These embarrassments, which made me testy and much disposed to quarrel with my neighbours, were at length obviated by the active services of Mohubullah, who having brought water and fuel from a long distance, prepared a mess of broth from some mutton in our store, which afforded a regale to a very hungry party. The Jidoon road being difficult of access, is little frequented, and, until the passage of our kafilah, had never, I was informed, been used by merchants. The common tract lies through the Puckley territory, but the inhabitants of that quarter,
notorious

notorious for a fierce and predatory disposition, had lately committed so many robberies on commercial property, that the director of our party judged the route too hazardous.

ON the 30th, at Manghellee, six coffes, a small town, the residence of a Shadee Khan, the chief of Tidtoon. Halted at this place for the adjusting the payment of duties, and of an escort, that had accompanied our progress through the country, until the 4th of July, when we proceeded to Kotillee, a fort in the possession of Meimoun Khan, a brother and vassal of the chief of Janoul. Halted on the 5th, to compose a difference of opinion, that had arisen among the merchants, respecting the choice of a road.

ON the 6th, at Nheamut or Enayet Serau, eight coffes, a fortified village, with a karavansera, situate on the western limit of Janoul, the territory of Gul Shere Khan, a Mahometan of the Afghan tribe. Being told that the merchants would be detained some days at this place, for the discharge of customs, and thence proceed to the town of Beer, the residence of Gul Shere, where as at many other stations, a long delay would be occasioned, I proposed to Mohubullah the prosecution of our journey by a nearer route. He gave a ready assent to the measure, assuring me also, that his knowledge of the country and many of the principal people promised very reasonable success; but he required, as the first condition, an implicit obedience to all his directions, and a

restraint on that impatience of temper, with which he was sorry to observe I was too much actuated.

ON the 7th we left the Serauce, and conducted by a guide through an unfrequented path, we passed without molestation the Tyrrhone districts, where most danger was apprehended, and halted, during the heat of the day, at a small fortified village.

IN the evening, after various alarms, we arrived at the fort of Kote, nine coffes, which, with an adjacent district, is held by a Nujjeeb Khan. It is to be noticed, that Enayet Serau stands on the west side of a break of that great range of mountains, extending along the head of the Punjab, and within which I had travelled, with little variation, from the Ganges to that place, whence I entered the plain country.

ON the 8th, at Mourree, five coffes, a small village, depending on the Harbarry territory, which is governed by a powerful Afghan chief. We had set out from Kote in good spirits, enjoying the idea of being liberated from a party obstructed by constant delays, and the hope of making an expeditious journey, through a tract, which was, we now found, exposed to the incursions of banditti. But these pleasing thoughts were wholly dispelled by the intelligence of a passenger, who told us, that when he left Kote, a body of horsemen were preparing to follow and plunder us. Mohubullah immediately resolved to return to the fort, where he said they would be deterred from offering

offering any violence, and having lodged me in a house of one of the inhabitants, he went to a neighbouring village, the residence of a Seid, who had acquired a great influence in that quarter, and solicited his protection, which he informed me by a messenger had been readily granted. On receiving this favorable intelligence, I went to the Seid to return thanks for this opportune assistance, and found him stretched on a bed amidst a grove of shady trees, and surrounded with boys, some fanning him, while others were gently rubbing his body. Though his manners evidently displayed that superiority which the supposed descendants of Mahomet usually assume from their lineage and rank, he was not wanting in a polite civility; nor did he refuse some small offerings, that were presented to him with much respect. The authority of this man was so implicitly admitted, that we were escorted in safety by a single domestic, whose services were liberally rewarded. Fear produces in the mind strong effusions of an apparent generosity and gratitude, and when skilfully wrought on by the man of the world, seldom fails to yield him an ample harvest. It is a severe reflection on humanity, says Bruyere, that the disposition of man is ever the most effectually meliorated in the hour of calamity. At Mourree we received intelligence, that a Peshour kafilah, had a few hours before departed on its way home, which gave us great joy, especially to Mohubullah, who now saw the near prospect of a conclusion to the perilous task he had undertaken.

ON

ON the morning of the 9th, before day light, we left Mourree, and after travelling some hours through a wild and gloomy tract, on which the turn of my mind, threw perhaps, an additional shade, and encountering many ill-looking fellows, who viewed us with a keen eye, we joined the Peshour party, where we experienced from the countrymen of Mohubullah, every token of welcome.

AT noon arrived at Hyder Bunghee, nine coshes, a populous village dependant on Attock, the principal town of a small district, which acknowledges the supremacy of Timur Shah. The chief, an Afghan, yields an obedience conformable to the motions of that prince, or the leading motives of the day; but, when destitute of other resource, he furnishes a tribute of about fifty thousand rupees.

ON the 10th, at Bazzar, five coshes, a small village, at the distance of three quarters of a mile from the western shore of the river Indus,* which we crossed about twenty miles above the town of Attock. The stream, though not agitated by wind, was rapid with a rough undulating motion, and about three quarters of a mile, or a mile in breadth, where it was not interrupted by islands; and having, as nearly as I could judge, a west and by south course. The water was much discoloured by a fine black

* In the Persian language, usually called the Ab or Water of Scind, and sometimes Neil Ab or Blue Water; and by the Hindoos Scind and Attock.

sand,

sand, which, when put into a vessel, quickly subsided. It was so cold, from (I apprehend,) a large mixture of snow, then thawed by the summer heats, that in drinking it, my teeth suffered a violent pain. In our boat were embarked seventy persons, with much merchandize and some horses. This unweildy lading, the high swell of the current, and the confusion of the frightened passengers made the passage dangerous and very tedious.

THE Indus forms a strong barrier to Hindostan on the west, and it seems a manifest truth, that had the Indians made their grand stand on the banks of this river, at the period of the Tartar, Afghan, and Persian invasions, their empire might have made a powerful resistance. Armies at all times have sustained difficulties and damage in crossing the Indus, but the attempt to force its passage must be arduous and full of danger.

THE road from Muzzufferabad, tending to the south-west, led me through the mountains, into the upper part of the Punjab, at Nheamut Serau ; from which place to Kote, are seen some scattered hills ; but thence, the country is plain and thinly wooded. The inhabitants, chiefly Afghans, or as they are called, in India, Patans, live in small forts or walled villages, and entertain such mutual dread and distrust of each other, that a single traveller is a rare object. The depredations of the Sicques, on the Attock and adjacent districts, generally subject this tract of country to much desolation, and a failure of rain, in the preceding year, now gave it the appearance of a desert.

ON

ON the 11th, at Akorah, a small town. At the distance of six miles from the great river, crossed the Attock, so called, in these parts, from its falling in the Indus, in the vicinity of the town of that name; but, in some of the interior parts of Afghanistan, it is denominated the Kabul river.* The weather had now become extremely hot; and I was often surprized, at my ability to bear, with scarcely a shelter, the force of so scorching a sun. I arrived at Akorah about noon; when, immediately entering a spacious cool mosque, I spread my bed, and lay down much at my ease. In the evening, the time of a common prayer, being desired, by one of the Mollahs or Priests, to prepare myself for the ceremony, I urged in excuse, the debilitated state of my body which prevented the requisite performance of so incumbent a duty; looking at me with contempt, he said, it was the more necessary to pray, that I might obtain better health. At midnight, I perceived a person endeavouring to take my turban from the bed-clothes, and being caught by the arm, he told me in a faltering voice, that he was the Mollah of the mosque, and, from his speech, I believe, the man who had reprehended my neglect of prayer. What think you, my friend, of these Mahometans, who, if they wash and pray at the five stated times, abstain from wine and the flesh of hogs, and utter a string of Arabic ejaculations which they do not understand, believe that they have procured the divine licence.

* Its course lying within six miles to the south-east of that city.

to violate the laws of justice. This opinion is not formed on the moment, but has arisen from long experience and the intimate intercourse, which my various occupations in India have produced ; and is now so firmly substantiated by undeviating testimony, that it shapes my general sentiments of the Mahometan character. When they daringly commit these acts on each other, even amidst the rites of their religion, what is to withhold their attacks on those of a different faith ?

THIS day a body of Afghan cavalry encamped in the environs of Akorah, and overspread the country like a swarm of locusts, devouring and destroying wherever they went. It seemed as if the land was invaded, they entered in a violent manner, every village within their scope, and fed themselves and horses at the expense of the inhabitants. Such expeditions afford these hungry creatures almost the only public means of subsistence ; for when inactive, they are often reduced to such distress, by the blind parsimony of their prince, that their horses, arms, and cloths are sold for a livelihood.

ON the 12th, at the village of Peer Pyah, ten coffes.

ON the 13th, at the village of Kalalah, eight coffes, the residence of Mohubullah's family, where I was treated with much hospitality. The male inhabitants of this village, are all proprietors of mules, and employed in conveying merchandize, and from the name of their abode, denominated Kalals.

ON the 14th, at Peshour, four cosses, a large, populous and opulent city, governed, with the dependant districts, by an Afghan officer, who remits to the capital a revenue of seven lacks of rupees. The road from the Indus to Peshour, has nearly a west and by south direction; and the country to Akora is sandy and interspersed with stones; from thence to Peshour, are seen many tracts of cultivation. The city of Peshour was founded by the great Acbar, who seeing, it is said, the Afghans averse from dwelling in towns and the occupations of commerce, encouraged the inhabitants of the Punjab, Mahometans, and Hindoos, to resort to his new settlement, where their descendants have greatly multiplied. From its well chosen position, which unites, by a commercial chain, Persia and Afghanistan with India, Peshour has become an important mart, and the residence of wealthy merchants; especially of the shaul dealers, many of whom disliking the dangerous and tedious route of Kashmire, are here enabled to make their purchases at a moderate advance on the first cost. I found a small society of Jews at Peshour, living at their ease, and in the enjoyment of an unreserved protection.

THE heat of Peshour seemed to me more intense, than that of any country I have visited in the upper parts of India. Other places may be warm; hot winds blowing over tracts of sand, may drive us under the shelter of a wetted skreen; but at Peshour, the atmosphere in the summer solstice, becomes almost inflammable. Yet it must be noticed, in favour of its salubrity, even in this
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torrid state, that the people enjoy uncommonly good health, and are little subject to epidemical disorders. The markets are abundantly supplied with provisions of an excellent kind, particularly the mutton, which is the flesh of the large tailed sheep, said to have been first discovered in South America. Though the city is so much frequented by merchants and travellers, it has no karavansera; and I thought myself fortunate in procuring admittance into an old mosque, where I continued for many days to dissolve in an unremitting state of perspiration, the mention of which, leads me to an occurrence, that involved me in great perplexity.

AT Kashmire, a part of my property had been converted into a bill of five hundred rupees, on Kabul, which was lodged in a canvas belt, that served me as a girdle; on examining the condition of the bill, at Peshour, I found the writing so much obliterated by perspiration, that no one could read, or even conjecture its subject; from beginning to end, it had literally a black appearance. The apprehension of the evident difficulties which would attend my want of money, in a country where the most sanguine hope could promise no assistance, and the necessity of mixing in societies, void of every good or rational principle, occasionally operated in depressing my spirits. But the desire which had originally impelled the journey, and the zeal which had hitherto maintained its pursuit, at length dissipated these

gloomy impressions, and in gay colours, described a various scene of future pleasure.

BEING informed that a kafilah was immediately proceeding to Kabul, I hired a mule, and went to the adjacent village of Tackal, the usual rendezvous of travellers, going to the westward. On my arrival there, I learned, that the great kafilah still continued at Peshour, and that only some horsemen confiding in their speed and arms, had moved early in the morning towards Kabul. A reflection on the predicament in which I then stood, the slow pace of my mule, which had more the appearance of an ass, and the representation of the muleteer, whose fears prompted innumerable falsties, slackened my strong inclination to escape from the heats of Peshour, and after making a fruitless attempt to overtake the horsemen, I returned to my lodging in the mosque. Sauntering one day in the bazar, the common resort of idle, as well as busy people, I saw a person, with whom I had travelled from Muzzufferabad to Enayet Serau. We agreed, as our road was the same, to travel together, and in the mean time to share the same fare. So cordial is the pleasure resulting from society, so naturally do we cling on each other, whether for support or amusement, that I immediately looked on this man as an approved friend, and felt a confidence from the connection, which set my mind at perfect ease. On enquiry into the finance of my associate, whose name was Noor Mahomed, I discovered, that he possessed in cash,

cash, one rupee, on which himself, a boy and a horse, were to be subsisted until his arrival at Kabul, a journey of twelve or fourteen days; I perceived also, that on the expenditure of this sum, he would seek an aid from me. Fully apprized of the danger, as well as inconveniency of disclosing the amount of my property, I gravely told Noor Mahomed, that I had then no more than three rupees, which, with his single one, should be placed in a joint fund, and that on it and providence, we must trust until our arrival at the capital. The Mahometan, with a countenance brightening with faith and zeal, exhorted me to be of good cheer; for that true believers were never deserted in the hour of need.

On the 25th of July, accompanying a large kafilah, in which a portion of the Kashmire tribute, invested in shauls, was conveyed, we proceeded to the village of Tackal, three cosses, where we laid in a provision for three days journey, the ensuing tract of country, for that distance, being thinly inhabited.

On the 26th, at Timrood, four cosses, a fortified small village, situate on the south side of a range of rocky mountains, which reflected a scorching heat on the plain beneath. The inhabitants of this village, genuine Afghans, have little respect, though residing so near Peshour, for either the person of Timur Shah, or his government, which was in some degree evinced during our halt. The governor of Kashmire had sent with our kafilah, for the use of the prince, four large dogs of Thibet, which were carried in litters, and attended with much care. The keepers had
led

led them to drink at a pond, where an Afghan woman was, filling her pitcher, but, on seeing these animals, which the Mahometans hold unclean, she put it down and by a shower of stones and abuse drove the whole party from the place, loudly calling at the same time, on the villagers to her assistance, which she little needed. The Afghans immediately assembled and completed the route of the dogs and their keepers, bestowing on the Shah, also, very contemptuous language, nor were they suffered to return to the pond, until escorted by the kafilah guard.

On the 27th, at Dickah, eighteen coses, a small village, standing on the southern bank of the Kabul or Attock river, which here runs to the right, or eastward. At the distance of about two miles from Timrood, we entered a narrow defile, which intersects the chain of mountains, lying to the north of the village. At the entrance of the pass, the Afghans stopped the kafilah, and, excepting some troops of the Shah, levied a small contribution on all the passengers; they receive, also, an annual sum from the government of Peshawar, for permitting travellers to pass unmolested through their district. In the first part of this day's journey, fraught throughout, with danger and fatigue, the rain which fell in torrents, nearly destroyed my papers, and completed the obliteration of the bill, now destitute of mark or token; and I judged it as formally cancelled, as if a receipt had been passed for the amount. Towards the close of the day, I was entangled, by my own indiscretion, in a perilous adventure, the issue of which, must be, wholly ascribed to

to good fortune. When the rain had ceased, the heat of the sun was extreme, and neither shelter or water was to be procured. Anxious to escape from these inconveniencies, for the journey was yet long, and the kafilah proceeded at a slow rate, about thirty of us, mounted, and the greater part well armed, resolved to leave the escort. Had I derived the uses which men usually do from experience, and reflected but a little on those resulting, especially in my situation, from the *festina lente*, I should not have joined this Quixote detachment. We had advanced about four miles, when a small body of Afghans, which had issued from the hills and stopped us, peremptorily demanded a sum of money, as a toll for passing through their territory. Here I feel myself sensibly humbled, when, as a faithful narrator, I am obliged to say, that our corps behaved in a most pusillanimous manner and sacrificed without fair cause, the evident advantage which a common exertion of spirit would have given. We were about thirty, strong, and, to the sight, resolute good looking fellows; all armed, except myself, with matchlocks or side arms. On the enemies approach, our leader, a portly man with a large beard and spreading mustachios, mounted on a curvetting steed, was struck with a violent terror, which was instantly communicated to the party. The mountaineers failed not to augment the consternation, and, without ceremony, proceeded to the usual modes of plunder: But, fearful of the arrival of the kafilah, they were prevented from a total capture. Aware of the risk of this day's journey, I had concealed
my

my cash in two long and narrow purses, which, in the manner of garters, were tyed round my legs. This arrangement was fortunate, for the Afghans perceiving my reluctance to dismount, knocked me off the mule, and forcibly opened the different parts of my dress; not finding any thing of value, they were proceeding to treat me with violence, when a Hindoo, of the family of the Dewan of Kashmire, who had known me in that country, interposed his good offices, and proposed a ransom for my releasement. This generous Hindoo, who I hope will undergo no further transmigration, unless he likes it, exerted so much warmth in my behalf and spoke so urgently to those marauders, that one of them gave him a severe blow on the face. He did not, however desist, but by an active perseverance, supported by a small sum of money, he accomplished his purpose. At the close of this affair, I had mounted my mule and was rejoicing at the escape, when I received a smart blow on my back; and turning about, an Afghan, who had taken this mode of attracting my notice, told me, with an exulting laugh, that our party might now move on, as the kafilah was in sight, but directed us, if the safety of our lives was regarded, not to join it until it should have passed the place of action. This injunction was speedily obeyed by me and some others; but, our doughty commander, seeing the near prospect of relief, began to utter many bold words, and shew a disposition of recovering his property and honor by an assault of the Afghans; who roused, at the menace, though the kafilah was close at hand, drew their
daggers

daggers and advanced their shields, daring him to battle and to fight for what he had lost. The cautious officer, again, qualified his wrath; but he reprobated them in very spirited language, and denounced a severe vengeance on some fitter occasion. In the latter part of the journey, an Hindoo, who had gone about a quarter of a mile from the party, was plundered of property to the amount of four hundred rupees, by a small body of these robbers who had made a sudden descent from the hills, and before assistance could be given, secured the booty. It was with much pleasure, after the peril and toil of the day, I saw the Kabul river and the small village of Dickah, where we halted. The stage from Timròod to Dickah, usually called the Hyber-pass, being the only one in which much danger is to be apprehended from banditti, the officer of the escort gave orders to his party to quit the kafilah, and march early on the next morning. This opportunity, at once offering safety and expedition, was not to be foregone; yet, the muleteer was with great difficulty persuaded to embrace it, and but for the interference of Noor Mahomed, who was obliged to beat him into compliance, I must have attended the tedious progress of the kafilah. Before I quit this station it is necessary to lay before you a brief account of the tribe of Afghans, through whose district we had now passed.

You will naturally be surprized, that a small body of people residing near the capital of an extensive empire, should not have been restrained from infesting one of its most public roads. The

lawless conduct of this sect of Afghans, who are known in this country by the name of Hybers, originates chiefly in the imbecility of Timur Shah's government, and his want of military spirit. They are strongly aided also in the pursuit of a freebooting life, by the situation of their country, which forms a chain of rocky mountains, whose scanty slips of valley afford but the coarsest provision for human wants. This rude race of men have made so slow a progress in civilization, that the greatest part of them, like the storied Troglodites of old, dwell in caves, or rather in the fissures of rocks. Though professing the Mahometan religion, they are little more versed in it than believing Mahomet to be their prophet, that he had four distinguished friends, and that the Persians, with the whole sect of Ali, are a miscreant race of infidels. The Hyber dialect is founded on the common language of the Afghans, but harshly guttural, and is ill understood by the adjacent tribes. Timur Shah, who used formerly to pass the winter at Peshour, which is there much milder than at Kabul, never passed through the territory of the Hybers, without their attacking his advanced or rear guard. An Armenian, with whom I was acquainted in travelling from Moultan towards Kabul, arrived at Peshour, where taking alarm at the perils of the Hyber-pass, he returned to Moultan, a journey of three weeks, thence he proceeded to Kundahar, a month's journey, from which place it is a distance of fifteen days to Kabul; making in all, a passage of nine weeks, which

which is usually performed by the Hyber-track in eleven days. This fact, at the same time that it marks the caution and patience of an Armenian, explains the dread entertained of the Hybers.

On the 28th, before day break, having joined the party that had escorted the kafilah, we left Dickah, and, at the distance of seven cosses, halted near the village of Bissouly, to dry our baggage, which had been exposed all the morning to a heavy rain. In moving again, we experienced many obstacles from the extreme darkness of the night, and the numerous currents of water, which suddenly produced by the rains, poured from the hills with extreme impetuosity; carrying with them stones of a vast size, whose rolling noise resembled thunder. It was midnight, the sky was overcast with black clouds, and the roaring of the torrents heard on all sides, created in my mind a certain horror mingled with awe, and I was involuntarily led to consider this grand scene of nature with sentiments of profound reverence.

On approaching a rivulet, which had been greatly enlarged by the rain, our chief dispatched first, that she might not be incommoded by the crowd, one of his favourite women, who, though mounted on a strong horse, had no sooner entered the stream, than she was swept away by its force and drowned. This event occasioned an immediate halt, and very sensibly afflicted our leader, who threw himself on the ground, and loudly lamented the fate of his mistress. At day break, the body was found on the shore, co-

vered with mud, and after interring it with such ceremonies as the occasion admitted, our party crossed the stream, now reduced to a small size.

ON the 29th, at Jillalabad,* twelve coffes, formerly a town of great note, and though now much decayed, still supporting a moderate traffic. It has a public market, and the adjacent district produces a coarse sugar. Yesterday the country was open and fertile; to day the road led over a barren tract, interspersed with hills.

ON the 30th, at the village of Balabaugh, eight coffes.

ON the 31st, at the village of Gundamouck, ten coffes; about three miles to the eastward of Gundamouck, crossed a small fordable river,† running to the southward or right, over which are the remains of a bridge built of bricks. The air, hitherto hot, had assumed at this place a sudden coldness; not effected by any change of weather, but agreeably to the observation of travellers, peculiar to the climate of this part of the country. The shortness of our stay would not permit an inquiry into the cause of this quick transition, nor could any of my associates, though used to the road, give a reasonable account of it. Passengers, I believe, throughout Asia, make journies merely from motives of profit or conveniency, sometimes of religion. A desire of knowledge, or

* The Attock river runs about two miles to the northward of the town.

† I imagine it falls into the Attock river at some short distance.

even pleasure, rarely carries them abroad; and they move from one stage to another, without deviating an unnecessary footstep. Yet they are minutely skilled in the rates of provisions at all the markets, and whether the place is a hot or a cold one, farther they know not, nor do they ever ask. Near the village of Gundamouek is seen a white stone, said to resemble the head of an elephant, and I believe, that which the Persians term the *Sung Suffede*.* The air, in this quarter, must have been strongly impregnated with nitrous particles, for all the exposed parts of my body became covered with a white scaly substance, of a saline taste, which in a short time excoriated the outer skin.

On the 1st of August, at Baracow, a sandy uninhabited valley, ten coffes. The officer of the escort, proceeding this day to Kabul with those that were well mounted, our party was reduced to a small number. We remained, during the noon heat, at Juggid Ali, where I think there is only one house, which stands under the shade of a few trees, and where it is said, the wind continues to blow with violence during the whole year. Its force did not abate during our stay, and if such is its usual rate, Æolus, had he lived in our day, would at least have chosen Juggid Ali for one of his country seats. Noor Mahomed, whom I suppose you have lost sight of, believing that my money was now expended, or that I would not advance more,

* Signifying in the Persic a white stone.

had

had for some time treated me with neglect, almost insult, and in despite of his former assurance, that zealous Mahometans were never abandoned, we should have felt extreme distress, had he not borrowed a little cash from a horse dealer, and I from the private fund.

ON the 2d of August we commenced our journey, that day a long one, at three o'clock in the morning, and in ascending a high steep hill, which forms one side of the valley of Baracow, the tackle of my mule broke; when I, the animal and baggage, rolled rapidly to the bottom. In my way down, I roared out with vehemence for assistance, but every person being engaged in more interesting business, no notice was taken of my clamours. My situation would have been very comfortable, had I not perceived Noor Mahomed passing close by me, whose help I earnestly intreated. After a long hesitation, and a hearty curse which I bore with patience, he consented to stay, and having assisted in collecting my scattered garments, and repairing the mule's tackle, we proceeded together. During a smart debate, in which his illiberal conduct and my ill luck were keenly reprobated, it was found that we had strayed from the path. But the effects of a mutual fear, soon absorbed the late grievance, and united our exertions in discovering the right path, which was found after much groping.

CROSSING a range of rocky hills, which extends with little intervention of valley for the space of about eight miles, we entered
a wide

a wide plain well watered and interspersed with walled villages. The Kabul river runs through this plain, over which, at the distance of four or five miles to the southward of the city, is a bridge * built of bricks. On our approach to the capital, an active scene of personal decoration took place, yet in a fashion very different from that of the beaux of Europe. Instead of powdering and curling the hair of the head, a Mahometan is there close shorn, and so far from thinking that beauty is imparted by a smooth chin, he measures the comeliness of his countenance, even the extent of honour, by the length and breadth of his beard.† It is no uncommon oath in this country to swear by the beard; and to call a man *bad reish*, or bad beard, is held a bitter reproach, but *petit maitres* are not wanting among the Mahometans, especially in the exhibition of the beard; and though they do not apply to it *marechale* powder or pomade divine, it is clipped into some favourite shape with much nicety, and should the natural hue be not liked, it is stained with a shining black colour,‡ which lasts a long time. Imagining from the behaviour of Noor Mahomed, that I should not see him again, and wishing to make a final trial of his disposition, I desired him to fix some period for the payment of his debt, which a fair and very short account stated at

* Called *Byramy*.

† The Persians, Afghans, and most of the natural Turks, encourage the growth of the beard; while the Indian Mohometans, Patans excepted, ordinarily shave it.

‡ This dye is composed of Indigo, and the leaves of the Ivory shrub.

five shillings. He observed with much indifference, that the road was an improper place for the adjustment of accounts, and that he would take some future occasion for the purpose.

IN the evening I arrived at Kabul, fifteen cosses, the capital of the Afghan empire; and, after a long search, found a Georgian, for whom I had brought a letter of introduction, from his countryman at Kashmire; having read the letter, he made me an offer of half his apartment, and such assistance as a stranger might need. This acceptable tender was embraced with little circumlocution, and I was immediately received into a mess, which then consisted of Bagdasir the Georgian, and the Armenians whom I mentioned to have made the circuitous route from Peshour to Kabul. My host resided in a karavansera, once paid by foreign traders, and had passed twenty years of his life at Kabul. My first care was to disclose to him the injured state of my bill; at which he shook his head, observing, that as no letter in it seemed legible, it was not to be expected men would come forward in a business, that would in any shape, take money from them. The Merchants of Kabul, he said, differed much in their mode of dealing, from those of India, and with difficulty, were brought to discharge payments demanded on the clearest authority, much less on a plea so equivocal as that of mine. The truth of this reasoning was on the next day fully proved, for not a merchant of the city, and all were applied to, would even attempt to decypher the paper, when he understood it contained

contained an order of payment. This event sensibly affected my future progress, and I feared would detain me at Kabul until clearer credentials were obtained. Another occurrence befell me at this time, of a much more trivial nature; but as it serves to pourtray perhaps a national character, may deserve a notice.

THE muleteer, who had accompanied me from Peshour, charged me with having given him a counterfeit rupee on the road, and now required its exchange. He had before made known to me his suspicion of this piece of money, which one of the passengers had given him, and had solicited my interference for redress. When I recounted this fact, reprobating also the shameless fraudulency of the attempt, the boy, for he was not more than sixteen years of age, daringly told me to spare my words and pay the money, or he would prefer a double complaint against me, and make oath to the kazzi, that none of the mule-hire had been paid; though himself had witnessed the advance of half the hire at Peshour. His youthful appearance, and so intrepid a declaration, united in striking me with horror, and I instantly put my hand to my purse to prevent his purpose, when Bagdasir, who had heard our discourse, insisted that no money should be paid without an order from the judge. They went to that officer's court, where the muleteer, without a wince, made oath to the truth of his demand, which was forthwith paid

by Bagdasir, who returned crossing himself, and congratulated my easy escape from the clutches of a young incarnate devil.

By sleeping in the open air I imagine, and on nitrous ground, a fever, accompanied with an ague, seized me a few days after my arrival at Kabul, the effects of which were singularly violent. The fever, during its continuance, caused a delirious stupefaction, and created an insatiable thirst, which frequently relieving by draughts of extremely cold water, it seemed at once to gush from every pore, and drenched me in profuse perspiration. When the fit of ague commenced, my bed-cloths, with those of Bagdasir, and all the horse-covering that could be procured, were heaped on me, but to little purpose; for I lay in the state of the damned, if such can be formed by human idea, until the paroxysm had wreaked its vengeance. My body was filled with spots of a very bright colour, shaded between purple and crimson, which I should have beheld with pleasure, thinking that such eruption would diminish the disease, had not an Armenian pronounced them a symptom of the plague. This opinion gave a common alarm; and though no alteration appeared in the conduct of Bagdasir, it operated strongly on the fears of my neighbours, and they were disposed to exclude me from their quarter, when I confidently asserted that the fever of the plague always produced its crisis in three days. Seeing that I had endured seven, and preserved a brisk flow of spirits, their apprehension was much allayed, and the scheme of banishment set aside.

ENDEA-

ENDEAVOURING one day to look through the tube of my tobacco-pipe with my right eye, the left being closed, I perceived it to be wholly without sight. This was a mortifying event, and that my ills might be more grievous, I was afflicted with a spitting of blood. Bagdasir now called in a doctor of physic, who after pronouncing me in a deplorable state, and that little short of a miracle could save me, undertook the cure, through the medium of some medicine only known, he said, to himself, and which had never failed of success. Entertaining from the discourse of my physician, but a slender opinion of his ability, I used, under different pretences, to send Bagdasir out of the room, and disposed of the medicine where no injury could be done. The disorder having directed its full force against me for the space of twenty days, began, as if wearied with the exertion, to abate, and in a short time it wholly ceased, but my frame was so shattered and my nerves so much relaxed, that I could scarcely crawl about, and the least noise produced a violent tremor. In the course of my illness I was visited by many of the Armenians, and one of them, a zealous devotee, desired me to swallow some small rolls of paper, on which were written certain mysterious words, infallible, he said, in their effects, upon the bodies of pious christians.

I EXPRESSED my thanks to this dealer in spells, and readily agreed to take his dose, should Bagdasir who was my absolute director, give assent. On an investigation into their virtue, he permitted me, though with reluctance, for he abhorred the Armenian

fect, to eat them, at the same time expressing strong doubts of their efficacy. But whether from not being a member of the orthodox faith, as the Armenian urged, or according to the Georgian, from the heretical preparation of the charm, I received no benefit, indeed I grew daily worse, as the sickness was then in its progressive stage.

OBSERVING on my arrival at Kabul, a common toleration of religion; that Christians, Hindoos and Jews, openly professed their creed, and pursued their occupations without molestation; and aware also that the Mahometan character would deprive me of the advantage of Bagdadir's connection, I had informed him that I was a native of Europe, returning from India into my own country. At first I designed to take the name of a Frenchman, but the wandering temper of that people, who stray into every corner of the earth, made me fear detection; and had I been hardy enough to become an Englishman, one of those who have absorbed the Mahometan power in India, and in this country have obtained a superior military reputation, I should perhaps at this day, have been a bombardier in the corps of Timur Shah's artillery. To avoid these risques, I denominated myself a Spaniard.

It was with much satisfaction I saw the road from Kabul to Persia open, and a fair prospect of performing the journey into Europe, by the route which I had originally proposed. Two Armenian travellers, who had gone by sea from Astracan to Ure Gunje, a Tartar station on one of the rivers at the head of the Caspian,

Caspian, and thence to Kabul, by the road of Bochara and Balk, were earnest in persuading me to pursue their tract as the shortest and most free from danger. Yet in this scheme were some essential defects. The Persian language, on which was founded my chief support, would in this route render me little use, I learned also that the winter of Bochara was severe and long, that the Ure Gunje river, continued frozen until the month of March, and that no Russian vessel came there before May; though a journey from Kabul to the northern shore of the Caspian, by the way of Tary, might be performed in two months and a half, yet by winding at Bochara, and the eventual delays of procuring a passage by sea, it did not seem probable that I should reach Astracan before the ensuing June. This reason, with the dislike of visiting a country now barren of events or of any grand object of curiosity, determined me to enter Persia, where a knowledge of the language would assist in extending research, as well as combat with more probable success, the difficulties incident to my situation.

Having too fully, I fear, expatiated on personal concerns, I will now pursue the more useful tendency of this letter, and inform you that Kabul, the residence of Timur Shah and the capital of his dominion, is a walled city of about a mile and a half in circumference, and situated on the eastern side of a range of two united hills, describing generally the figure of a semicircle. The fortification, which is of a simple construction, with

with scarcely a ditch, and the houses built of rough stones, clay, and unburned bricks, exhibit a mean appearance, and are ill suited to the grandeur which I expected to see in the capital of a great empire. But the Afghans are a rude unlettered people, and their chiefs have little propensity to the refinements of life, which indeed their country is ill qualified to gratify.

FROM the Indus to the western limit of this extensive territory, there is an invariable deficiency of wood; infomuch, that the lower class of people in the northern quarter, suffer as much, perhaps from a want of fuel in the winter season, as those of other countries would do from a scarcity of provisions.

BALAU SIR, the name of the Shah's palace, where also the household servants, guards, and the slaves are lodged, stands on a rising ground in the eastern quarter of the city, and exhibits but a slender testimony of the dignity of its master. Having noticed what has not been done to decorate Kabul, I must not omit to mention the works of Ali Murdan Khan. This omrah, who held an eminent station in the service of Jchanguir, erected, nearly in the centre of the city, four spacious bazaars, or market places in a line, which consist of a range of apartments on each side of two floors, the lower appropriated to merchants, and that above to private use. The intermediate space between the ranges, is covered by an arched roof, and each bazaar is separated by an open square, which was supplied with fountains,

tains, but now choaked with filth or occupied by the meanest order of mechanics. Ali Murdan has left behind him many monuments of liberality and taste ; the grandest, though now in ruins, is seen in the vicinity of Dehli, and displays at once a design, useful and magnificent.

DURING the splendid æra of Dehli, when it covered according to popular tradition, a space of twenty miles, the inhabitants who resided at a distance from the Jumna, which skirted only one of its angles, experienced much difficulty in procuring river water, that of the wells not being esteemed so salubrious. Ali Murdan, desirous of relieving this common grievance, surveyed the land to the westward, and saw that a sluice, opened from the Jumna, where that river approaches Karnal, would from the declivity of the ground, introduce water into the back part of the city and conduct it through all the quarters. The design was put in execution, and to reward his success and preserve the work in good condition, Ali Murdan was vested with the privilege of levying a certain tax, on those houses which enjoyed the uses of the canal. Water was conveyed by this branch of the Jumna, forming a distance of more than one hundred miles and afforded a commodious supply to all the inhabitants ; nor, did the canal fall into decay, until the period of the Persian and Afghan invasions. Ali Murdan, who in his taste and disposition would not have disgraced the Roman Lucullus, bestowed on the public numerous edifices and gardens ; one of which thickly shaded with cypresses

cypress trees, stands in the environs of Peshour, and another at Nimlah, a small village lying about eighty miles to the south-east of Kabul, on the Peshour road.

A RESPECT for the memory of this omrah has, perhaps led me into too wide a deviation from which I will now return, and inform you that the districts of Kabul abound in excellent provisions, and that its market is arranged in a neater manner and more like that of an European town, than any I have seen in Asia. The fruits are of a good kind and in great plenty, as apples, pears, peaches, pomegranates and a variety of grapes.

THIS quarter of Afghanistan, possessing but few Indian productions, receive sugars and cotton cloths, chiefly from Peshour, whither it sends iron, leather and tobacco. To Kandahar it exports iron, leather and lamp oil, whence these turns are made in sundry manufactures of Persia and Europe, with a large supply of melons of an excellent sort. The Tartars of Bochara, bring to Kabul the horses of Turkistan, furs and hides, the latter resembling those in Europe, called Bulgar, the amount of which is applied to the purchase of Indigo, and other commodities of India.

THE adjacent parts of Usbeck Tartary of which Balk* is the capital, hold a species of dependency on Timur Shah and maintain a common intercourse with Kabul. I have seen the great bazaar, crowded with Usbecks, who have the same cast of features as the

* This city is about two hundred miles to the north-west of Kabul.

Chinese and Malays, but more harsh. Among the foreign nations who frequent this city, the Hindoos, chiefly of Peshour, contribute more than any other to enrich it, by a superior industry and knowledge of commerce; and they enjoy under the Afghan government, a liberty and protection, little short of that experienced by the inhabitants of our Indian possessions. The benefits derived by a state from the residence of any class of people, usually ensure to them a security of person and property; but the Hindoos of Kabul are indebted, I believe, for special indulgence to one of their own sect, who controuls the revenues of the Shah, and stands high in favour. The environs of Kabul are, chiefly occupied by garden grounds, and watered by numerous streams; the largest running through the city, over which is a small bridge,* affords a plentiful supply of salubrious water.

KABUL as has been before noticed, stands near the foot of two conjoined hills, whose length has nearly an east and west direction. Towards the base of the eastern stands, on a flat projection, a fortified palace, which was formerly the habitation of the governors of the city; but it has been converted by Timur Shah into a state prison, where the brothers of this prince and other branches of his family are kept in confinement. Above this building is seen a small tower on a peak, whence the ground rises to a considerable height, and is united by a neck of lower land to the

* Called I have since been informed the Pool Mistan.

other hill. From the peak, a stone wall extends over the summits of the two hills, and is terminated at the bottom of the westernmost by an ordinary redoubt.

THE Afghans are the indigenous possessors of a tract of country, which stretches from the mountains of Tartary to certain parts of the gulf of Cambay and Persia; and from the Indus to the confines of Persia. The inhabitants of this wide domain, have no written character and speak a language peculiar to themselves. They are a robust, hardy race of men, and being generally addicted to a state of predatory warfare, their manners largely partake of a barbarous insolence, and they avow a fixed contempt for the occupations of civil life. Though in some of our histories of Asia, the natives of Afghanistan are denominated Tartars, I am prompted to say, that they bear no resemblance to those people, either in their persons, manners, or language.

CERTAIN territories of Afghanistan, were conquered in the ninth century by the khans of Bochara, of the Samani race, and annexed to the Tartar principality of Khorasan, from whence a subordinate chief was deputed to govern at Guizni. But it does not appear that the northern quarter of the country was subdued until the reign of Mahmoud,* the second prince of the Giznavi dynasty, who completed the conquest of Afghanistan. No substantial tradition of the Afghans or the state of their country is

* He reigned in the eleventh century

found on record, until the year of the christian æra, 997, when Sabuctagi, a Tartar officer, in the service of the chief of Khorasan, who was subject at that period to Munfur at Samani,* the great khan of Bochara, having at his master's death, succeeded to the territory, renounced the Tartar vassalage, and extending his conquests to Afghanistan, made Ghizni the capital of his empire.

THE Ghiznavi dominion, which involved a large portion of Persia and Hindostan, acquired chiefly by the arms of Mahmoud, the son of Sabuctagi, flourished for the space of two hundred and seven years, when it was wrested from Kufro, the last of the race of Sabuctagi, by the Afghan Mohomed Ghor.† This prince bequeathed to Eldoze, a favorite slave, his possessions west of the Indus, which were quickly overrun by a Persian prince of Kharism, whose successor Tillal-ud-Dein, was compelled to fly before the victorious sword of Zinzis.‡

FROM the period of that revolution, till the invasion of Timur Beg, the history of the Afghans is immersed in general obscurity; and little satisfactory knowledge of their government has been communicated to us, except by Ferishta, who says that in the year 1251, Mahmoud, a Patan, king of Dehli, drove the Moghul Tar-

* The fifth prince of that dynasty.

† So called from Ghor a district or principal town, in the northern town in the northern part of Afghanistan.

‡ This event happened about the year 1242.

tars from Ghizni, and annexed it to the empire of Hindostan. It is probable, that it continued subject to the dominion of Delhi, until the expedition of Timur's into India, when the northern quarter of Afghanistan became a Tartar province.

As the great empire of Tartary fell into rapid decay on the death of Timur, and no relation being given of the subsequent existence of a Tartar government in Afghanistan, we may infer that it was ruled by its national chiefs until the year 1506, at which period, Baber, previously to his conquest of Hindostan, seized on Kabul and Ghizni, which occasionally with Kandahar, were held by his posterity for the space of two hundred and thirty one years, when Nadir Shah annexed them to the dominion of Persia.

IN arranging those heads of Afghan history, it may not be superfluous to note, that Mahmoud Ghorî, bequeathed his territory east of the Indus to a slave, whom he had adopted, named Kultub Ul Dein, the first Afghan or Patan* king of Dehli, from whom a succession of princes of the same nation, continued to reign for near three hundred years, and ended in Ibrahim, of the house of Lodi; who was slain in battle by Baber. The materials of this sketch, which are taken from Shirrifud Dein's memoirs of Timur, Dowe's History of Hindostan, and private desultory remarks, will not, I fear, communicate much useful information. For the want

* The race of Afghans are commonly known in India by the name of Patans, the meaning or etymology of which designation does not seem to be ascertained.

indeed

indeed of any native record, and the superficial manner in which the subject has been treated by foreign writers, little substantial matter can now exist for the construction of the history of the Afghans. Yet the loss is the more easily consoled, when it is considered, that little instruction or pleasure can arise to the mind, from reviewing the actions of a race of men enveloped in savage ignorance, and stigmatised even by the fierce Tartars for their cruelty and rapine.

THE Afghans received the religion of Mahomet from their Tartar conquerors, and like them professing the Sooni creed, are avowed enemies to the Schias, or the Sectaries of Ali. Though many of the tribes must have been converted at the period of the Ghizni dynasty, it is seen that Timur encountered a fierce body of this nation, whom he denominated infidels. At this day, the Afghans are esteemed the least correct of the Mahometans in religious observances; and few of them are conversant in foreign letters. Their common dress consists of a shirt, which falls over the upper part of long and narrow trowsers; a woollen vest, fitted closely to the body, and reaching to the mid-leg, and a high turned up cap, of broad cloth or cotton, usually of one colour, and of a conic form; with two small parallel slits in the upper edge of its facing. Bread of wheat and barley, milk, butter and cheese, compose the common diet of the Afghans; they also, in the winter season and on a journey, make frequent use of a food called croat, which is curdled milk, formed into small balls, hardened either by the heat of the sun or fire;

fire; this, when dissolved in warm water and mixed with bread, becomes equally savoury and nourishing. Their butter and cheese, are invariably made of the milk of sheep, which in this country, is said to be better adapted to the purpose than that of Kine. The cheese I thought of a good quality, though this opinion might have arisen from my long usage to a course of slender diet.

THE customs of the Afghans, agreeably to the cursory observations I made, seem in all the greater lines, similar to those of other Mahometan nations; with that difference which necessarily arises from climate, and from the disposition of a rude and polite people. Their women are concealed, though not in a very rigid manner; nor are they so much devoted to the pleasures of the haram, as the Indians, Persians, or Turks. They avow an abhorrence of that unnatural passion to which many of the Mahometan sects are addicted; and the perpetrators are punished with severity.

THE government of the Afghans, must ever receive a weighty bias from the genius of their ruler, and the degree of authority he may possess. But when not constrained, as in the present reign, by some extraordinary power or capacity of the prince, they disperse into societies, and are guided by the ruder principles of a feudal constitution. Conformably to this system, the different chieftains usually reside in fortified villages, where they exercise an acknowledged, though a moderate sway over their vassals, and yield a careless obedience to the orders of government. Rarely any appeal is made to the head of the state, except in cases which may
involve

involve a common danger ; when I have seen the authority of the Shah interposed with success.

THE land-holders are assessed, according to their capacity, in a stipulated sum, which is paid into the public treasury ; but as it is known that the demand of a large tax would be resisted, the government is temperate and lenient in its treatment of the native Afghan subjects.

THE armies of the empire are composed of a diversity of nations ; but the best troops are drawn from the Afghan districts ; each of which, on the event of service, furnish a stated quota at a low rate, and look for a greater reward in chance of war. The cities and towns are chiefly inhabited by Hindoos and Mahometans of the Punjab, who were established by the former princes of Hindostan, to introduce commerce and civilization into their western provinces ; many families of Tartar and Persian extraction are also dispersed through different parts of Afghanistan. The latter are denominated Parsewauns, the other Moguls ;* but they have both adopted the use of the Persian language ; and it may not be superfluous to observe, that the Tartar † conquerors of India, a descendant of whom still sits on the throne of Dehli, made the Persian character and language the common medium of record and

* The traders in horses and fruits, who make annual journeys into India, are chiefly of this joint class

† The Turkish is the vernacular language of that region of Tartary, which gave birth to the race of Timur.

corre-

correspondence, throughout their dominion; an usage at this day preserved in all the Mahometan states of Hindostan.

To throw some light on the modern history of Afghanistan, it is necessary to describe some events which were produced in that quarter and in Persia, previously to the invasion of Nadir-Shah.

ABOUT the year 1720, an army of Afghans, commanded by Mahmud, the son of Meervais, a chieftain of Kandahar, invaded Persia, and after a series of successes, he became possessed of Ispahan, the sultan Huseyn with all his sons, except Thamas Mirza, who made his escape, were made prisoners. Mahmud held possession of the capital and the southern provinces until his death, when the succession devolved on Ashruff, an Afghan of the same tribe, who in the year 1730, continued to exercise a sovereign power in the interior parts of the country. About this period, Thamas Mirza, who had fled from the Afghan arms, raised a body of military adherents, and ultimately aided by the prowess of Nadir his principle officer, made a vigorous attack upon the Afghan usurper; Ashruff maintained some obstinate conflicts with the Persian army, which was wholly commanded by Nadir, the most intrepid and successful soldier of the east; but he was compelled to yield to the superior genius of his enemy, and in retiring towards Kandahar with not more than a hundred men, he was attacked by a party of his marauding countrymen, and cut off after a desperate defence.

A POW-

A POWERFUL sect of Afghans, denominated Abdali, encouraged by the distracted state of Persia, had seized on Herat,* a large fortified city in Khorasan, and were preparing to reduce the province, when they were encountered by Nadir, who totally routed their army; fifteen thousand, it is said, being killed and wounded, and five thousand made prisoners. Having recovered the territories, which the Turks and Russians had dismembered from Persia during the weak reign of Huseyn, and expelled the Afghans, Nadir Shah deposed Thamas, and entering Afghanistan in the year 1737 with a large army, laid siege to the strong fortress of Kandahar, which was at that time held by Huseyn Khan, an independant Afghan chief. The exertions of this officer, aided by the natural advantages of his situation, detained the Persian in the vicinity of Kandahar, for the space of eighteen months. At the surrender of the fortress and other adjacent strong holds, Nadir made so temperate a use of his victory, that about four thousand Afghans, commanded by two of the officers of Huseyn, were induced to join his army; and it is mentioned that these troops, during the Indian expedition, rendered him essential service.

In the annals of that period, I have made diligent search for the name of Abdali Ahmed Khan, the founder of the modern empire of Afghanistan; but I have not been able to procure any accurate information of his origin or military progress, until he

* Supposed to be Aria of the ancients,

started forth with so brilliant a success at the death of Nadir Shah. That he was an Afghan there is no doubt, as the fact is fully proved in the person of his son Timur Shah; yet from Dowe's history, he has been brought into our notice by the name of the Persian Abdalli; by various records and oral tradition of the life of Nadir Shah, it is seen that he maintained a party of Afghans in his service, and having received in the latter period of his reign, a general testimony of the disaffection and meditated treachery of his Persian officers, he resolved to reduce them to obedience, or cut them off by the assistance of his foreign Troops; among whom, the Afghans, then, commanded by Ahmed Khan, were distinguished by pre-eminent marks of favor.

THE assassination of Nadir, was immediately followed by a furious attack on the Afghan troops, consisting of four or five thousand men; but their intrepid chief, though assailed by the whole Persian army, effected a safe retreat into his own country, where, seizing on a large treasure which the governor of Kabul, not yet apprized of the fate of Nadir, had dispatched to the Persian camp, and raising a numerous force, he was acknowledged the sovereign of the Afghan territories, by the title of Ahmed Shah. After establishing his authority at home, he penetrated into the northern quarters of India, which felt the force of his arm, and long groaned under the Afghan desolation.

AHMED SHAH having run through a long and arduous military career, and acquired even the character of a temperate and

just

just prince, died in the year 1773, in the vicinity of the new city of Kandahar,* which he had designed to be the capital of Afghanistan. This prince was succeeded by his son Timur, who keeps his court in the city of Kabul; to preserve the foreign possessions of his father, he made in the first part of his reign, some desultory expeditions into India; but on the issue of an unsuccessful campaign with the Sicques, he was compelled to relinquish the whole of the Punjab territory. At this day he retains, on the east side of the Indus, the principality of Kashmire, the district of Attock, with some scattered divisions of Moultan, including the city and the territory of Scind. Yet Timur Shah derives but few real advantages from his Indian domain. Scind at the period of my journey, was in a degree dismembered from his empire; no revenue had been remitted to Kabul for the space of two years, or any measure adopted to enforce obedience. And the governor of Moultan, confiding on his remote distance from the empire and the inactive disposition, of the prince, shews only that attention to the orders of government, which is most accordant with his purposes. From this outline you will perceive, that the Afghan dominion in India, does not stand on a flourishing ground; that under the auspices of Timur, few marks of its extension are evinced; or that it imparts any leading influence in the affairs of Hindostan.

* Nadir Shah destroyed the old fortress of Kandahar, which stood on the top of a high rocky hill, and founded on a contiguous plain, a city entitled Nadirabad; it was completed by Ahmed Shah, and is now only known by the name of Kandahar.

RUMOURS wafted from the court of Dehli, have occasionally agitated our quarter of India, and taught us to believe that Timur with a mighty host, had crossed the Indus, and was making rapid marches to Dehli, to restore the lost authority of the Moghul empire. But this is an empty tale, framed to raise the spirits of a decaying drooping court, or amuse the dreaming politicians of the day. It is indeed, so opposite to the truth, that the Afghan prince, instead of urging a foreign enterprize, seems afraid to move from his capital.* At this time a common outcry of the soldiery prevails against the Shah, for a large failure of military payments; and it appears that since the year 1780, when he visited Peshour, where he was treacherously attacked by a party of disaffected Afghans, he has shewn no desire of leaving Kabul.†

* Since that period Timur Shah, has appeared in the field and proceeded to the province of Moultan; but his operations, futile and indecisive, have terminated after much negotiation and threat, in a manifest incapacity to complete the reduction of a nominal tributary; and having dissolved the charm that popular opinion had impressed on his name, he returned ingloriously into his own country.

Note by the Editors.

† Some recent advices from India mention, that in the autumn of 1796, Zemaun Shah, the successor of Timur, had invaded the Punjab, and having completely routed the forces of the Sicques, had gained possession of Lahore; but was soon after recalled from thence to Kandahar by a rebellion excited there, during his absence, by a discontented chief, named Morad Khan. These accounts add that he was supposed to have suppressed this insurrection, and to be preparing to re-enter India with a very considerable army.

EXCLU-

EXCLUSIVE of his Afghan and Indian dominions, Timur Shah is possessed of a large division of Khorasan, which taking in the city of Herat, extends on the north to the vicinity of Nishabor and Turshish, and on the south to the lesser Irak. This prince, whom I have seen, is about forty six years of age, his person is above the middle size and rather corpulent; and, for a native of Afghanistan, his complexion is dark. In token of imperial dignity, he wears on days of ceremony, a high cap of black velvet, with a top of a quadrangular form.

FROM a want of vigor in the government, a thin population, and the aversion of the Afghans to civil occupations, the revenue of Timur Shah bears an inadequate proportion to the extent of his dominion. In Mr. Dowe's History of Hindostan, it is said that Ahmed Shah possessed a revenue of three millions sterling, and maintained a standing body of one hundred thousand cavalry. If such was the state of that prince's power and resources, it hath greatly decreased in the reign of his successor; whose whole force according to the information I procured in the country, does not exceed thirty thousand men, or his revenue a million of our money.

CAVALRY constitutes the chief military strength of Afghanistan, which as well from its own districts, as its contiguity to Tartary and Persia, procures good horses,* at a moderate rate.

* A serviceable horse is procured at Kabul, from five to six pounds sterling.

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A corps of infantry armed with matchlocks, composes also a part of the Afghan army ; but, as in countries where cavalry is formed of the higher classes of the people and denominates military honor and rank, this body is held in low account, and is little superior to the undisciplined soldiery of India ; and the Afghan artillery, may without depreciating it, be estimated by the same scale of comparison. Certain of the brothers of Timur Shah have raised occasional commotions in the government, and one of them named Sicunder, was in open rebellion, but it was quelled without producing any violent effect. This prince who hitherto experiences the obedience and filial duty of his own family, has appointed two of his sons, grown to manhood, to the separate charge of Kandahar and Herat ; both of them live in harmony with their father and are esteemed by the people.

THE remains of a colony of Armenians, which Nadir Shah had captured in his Turkish war, and established in the northern parts of Persia, whence it was removed by Ahmed Shah into Afghanistan, are now residing at Kabul. They intermarry with their own women and are allowed the free use of the christian religion, which is administered by a national priest. They were attached to the body-guard of the late Shah, whom they attended in his various expeditions ; and those who survived, amounting to about one hundred, were sometime employed by Timur in the like capacity ; but, since this prince has personally relinquished the pursuits of a military life, and neglected

neglected the maintenance of his army, the Armenians have fallen into great penury. They reside with their families in the precincts of the Balau Sir, and are permitted within a prescribed limit, to exercise discretionary occupations. Yet with all the industry which the tribe so abundantly possesses, they earn but a scanty pittance. In despite of this grievance of the gloomy sorrow pressed on them by poverty, by a condition of bondage, to which on this side of mortality, the most sanguine hope can fix no termination, they evince an unremitting activity in propagating their species : and would seem determined to entail on their race, an equal portion of that misery, which has so largely fallen to their lot.

FROM what has been already noticed, it were almost superfluous to say that Timur Shah possesses little enterprize or vigor of mind. For the last seven years, he has shewn little inclination to military action, or the aggrandisement of his Empire. It is true, that allured by the hope of acquiring an easy possession of one of the best cities, now remainining in Persia, he sent a body of troops to besiege Muschid, the capital of Khorasan ; but, the wretched equipment of his army and the slow progress of the siege, which was commenced in the preceding year, equally shew a want of spirit and ability.

THE Afghan government, when viewed as standing on a general basis of despotism, and compared with that of other Asiatic states, is not pregnant with injustice or cruelty. Its edicts are
feldom

seldom accompanied with bloodshed; nor is it inimical to any sect of strangers. The foreign and native merchants, enjoy at Kabul an ample protection, and maintain their rights with a spirit, rarely seen in a Mahometan country. Capital punishments are seldom inflicted, and though the kinsmen of the Prince have formed frequent conspiracies against the state, his hands are not stained with the blood of his family. Such are the virtues of Timur Shah, which were exemplified in various instances, during my residence at his capital. The ruling vice of this prince is avarice; from a dread of the fierce and untractable spirit of the Afghans, its effects are not severely felt in the collection of the territorial revenue; but it presses hard on the soldiery and household servants; on artificers, and on those merchants who unwarily vend their wares to the court without prompt payment. The facts, however desultory, that have been adduced, do not warrant the opinion that Timur Shah is an object of dread to the bordering states, or that he is justly entitled, the comet of the east, who we have been taught to believe, will at some unexpected moment, shoot across the Indus and the Ganges, and consume even our remote province of Bengal.

THE chief strength of the Afghan prince, I presume to say, is derived from the weakness and discord of his neighbours. Were the Sicque chiefs not more apprehensive of a domestic increasing influence, than desirous of subduing a constitutional enemy, they would, it may be fairly inferred, speedily extinguish the Afghan government

government in India ; and should the Persian force be thrown into a body, under the conduct of an able leader, it is not only probable, that the dismembered division of Khorasan would revert to its ancient possessors, but that the Afghans would again feel a foreign yoke.—With an earnest apology for this long letter, I remain,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XIV.

DEAR SIR,

HAVING in vain endeavoured to procure payment of my defaced bill, I sold it at half price to Bagdasir, my Georgian host, who agreed to abide by the chance of obtaining the full amount. God forgive me for doubting the integrity of my Christian host; but, some obscure parts of the negociation, and the exorbitant prices, charged upon sundry articles which I purchased from him, induced me to believe, that he had not played me fair. To throw rash blame on a man, who had rendered me such essential offices of humanity, and who, is cut off from every help of vindication, were a breach of one of the grand bonds of society. Nor had this suspicion been communicated, did it not lead to substantiate an observation I have often made; that a man, though devoted to the strict observance of the minutest ceremony of his religion, with a mind ostensibly fixed on objects lying beyond mortality, who, like the Georgian, loudly chants his morning and evening prayers, and on his beads, numbers a long list of martyred saints, shall at the

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same

same time, eagerly grasp at every advantage, which our world holds out to him ; nor shall he give even farthings to the poor. This covering has happily in the civilized world, become threadbare and flimsy, and except in fanatic conventicles, is seldom exhibited with success.

HAVING made the requisite preparations for my journey, and hired one side of a camel, on which a pannier was suspended for my accommodation, I joined a party proceeding to Kandahar.

ON the first September, at Killah Kazzee, the remains of a fort, three fursungs* distant from Kabul. This being a kafilah of camels, which in Afghanistan and Persia, are usually driven in the night, that the heat of the day and the effects of thirst, may be less felt, we departed on the evening of the 22d, and early next morning halted on a barren plain, five fursungs. The road lay through scattered hills of a moderate height, and a country thinly cultivated.

It is necessary to inform you, that I now appeared in the character of a Christian, conformably to the counsel of Bagdasir, who had confidently assured me that no risque would be incurred under such description ; and, he expatiated also on the grievous sin of throwing out any false colours on the score of religion. But it

* Throughout this quarter of Afghanistan and all the dominion of Persia, the land measurement is calculated by fursungs, which may be roundly computed, at four English miles. In some of the ancient authors, this measurement is termed parasang, agreeably to the alphabet of the old Persic in which the letter F is not contained.

was

was soon seen that the exchange involved a multiplicity of troubles. Never perhaps, did the meek and patient member of primitive Christianity suffer, among the Gentiles, greater indignity or more bitter reproach; martyrdom only was withheld; and that extremity of Christian honor, I was in perpetual dread of; though without any foretaste of those comforts, which flow from ardent zeal, or a consolatory belief that the church would derive either strength or credit from my sufferings.

THE mode of travelling, which I had now adopted being probably unknown to you, I will give it as it deserves, a rough description. The camel appropriated to the accommodation of passengers, carries two persons, who are lodged in a kind of pannier laid loosely on the back of the animal. The pannier, termed in the Persic, *kidjahwah*, is a wooden frame, with the sides and bottom of netted cords of about three feet long and two broad, and two in depth. The necessities of the passengers are conveyed in the *kidjahwah*, and the journey being usually made in the night-time, it becomes the only place of his rest; for on the *kafilah*'s arrival at his station, he must, immediately exert himself in procuring provisions, water and fuel; also in keeping an eye over his property to prevent theft. Had I been even much accustomed to this manner of travelling, it must have been irksome; but a total want of practice, made it excessively grievous. That you may not think my complaints ill-founded, or that I possess the ingenious though unhappy talent of creating
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calamities, I will lay before you a simple detail of facts. The box which I occupied, measured a length of two feet seven inches, with a breadth of one foot and a half; and my height being five feet and nearly ten inches, you will necessarily grant that equal address and force were required, to pack me in so disproportionate a compass. On reconnoitering the other side of the camel, I discovered, which alarmed me, an old woman and an infant. My fears indeed were soon verified, by the child beginning to cry and the nurse to scold; nor did the alternate strain cease the whole night. Our camel, too, was the worst conditioned of the drove; and a want of strength made the poor animal stumble and very restive. His ill properties did not remain long concealed; for, before the party had crept into their seats, the camel, which is accustomed to receive its burthen, in a kneeling posture, suddenly arose, when I, the nurse and child, with our various stock of equipment, fell to the ground in wide confusion; I then first experienced a taste of those ills, which are attached to the profession of Christian faith, in Mahometan countries.

THE camel driver, an Afghan of the rudest cast, reprobated me in severe terms as the cause of the mishap; but, he could expect no good fortune, he said, whilst in the society of an infidel, to whom, only, were to be attributed the false steps, and numerous they were, of the camel. With much joy I discovered, at the dawn of day, our halting place, where I was relieved

lieved from a complication of discordant sounds, and a cramp which had benumbed all my body.

AT Kabul I had endeavoured to procure a servant, knowing that in my present character, I should suffer much inconveniency without such an assistant. But Bagdasir was averse to the measure, observing that no Mahometan of character would enter my service, and that those who had overcome their scruples would rob me. Waving therefore so dangerous an accommodation, I commenced the journey, with a resolution of boldly facing every difficulty; yet to obtain the camel driver's good will, I paid him more than the usual hire.

ON the 24th, in the morning, at Azeeabad, five fursungs. The country, which I reviewed at day-break, was interspersed with low hills, and generally cultivated. Having now distinctly noticed our party, I perceived that Dowran, the name of the conductor, who plumed himself on being of the same tribe as Timur Shah, had with him a younger brother for a helper, and five camels; three of which carried merchandize, and two, passengers. The cargo of one of these having been described, it remains to say, that on the other sat an old Afghan lady of some distinction, her daughter, very handsome, and two grand children. The dame began an early contest with Dowran, but after some smart skirmishes, she gained a compleat victory over the driver, who sat down easy under the defeat, by observing that

that the lady had sprung from a noble race, and that the shrillness of her voice made his head ache.

ON the 25th, halted near a small fort, four fursungs. The night air was very cold, and the country presented the barren aspect of a bare plain, on which were scattered hills of rock and sand. Dowran's refusal of all assistance, on the score of my being an infidel and thereby unclean, obliged me to go daily in search of water and the dried dung* of camels, the only fuel of these parts, the kindling of which excited an excruciating pain in my eyes. But having fortunately laid in a small stock of biscuit, tea and sugar, I subsisted without much labour of cookery. This was I think, the first period of my life, in which to use a trite phrase, I had been thrown wholly on my back; for in the first part of my journey, I usually fared better than my companions. My manner was then confident, and the rough plenty of my board, procured many attentive adherents. The reverse now befell me, I was treated on all sides with such a brutal contempt, and experienced from a want of every help so many embarrassments, that I grievously lamented the dismissal of my Mahometan covering; which I resolved to take up on the most favorable occasion.

THE Armenians, in the course of journeying, are neither sub-

* For the purpose of collecting this fuel, kafilahs seldom vary their stations.

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ject to the grievances which affected me ; nor do they feel with much sensibility the insults of the Mahometans ; and by chiefly travelling with associates of their own nation, a mutual aid is afforded ; besides these advantages, they possess a flexibility of manners, which receives a form from every people with whom they mix. I have seen them manage with infinite address, the Hindoo, the Mahometan, and even the Jew ; a race whom they affect, on a religious principle to hold in abhorrence ; but the grand cause of their hatred, is a close commercial rivalry. Treatment, at which an Armenian would have smiled or endured with profound submission, I should either by my hands, or at least my tongue, have warmly resented : for though not ill versed in the manners of the east, I never had sufficient forbearance to submit to the reproachful insolence which the Mahometans, especially the vulgar, exercise towards those of a different faith.

DOWRAN, from my awkwardness in all culinary matters, and a want of strength to assist in loading his camels, the only qualities in his mind, constituting an useful man, conceived a contemptible opinion of me, which he thought could not be more forcibly expressed, than circulating a report in the kafilah that I was a Jew. This was a new battery opened against me, but having procured the protection of the old Afghan lady, by fondling the children and giving them sugar, I successfully combated Dowran, who had now altogether submitted to a female government.

ON the 26th, at Ghizni, four fursungs. This city remained

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the capital of an extensive, powerful empire for the space of four hundred years, and according to the historian Ferishta, was adorned by the Ghiznavi princes, particularly the great Mahmoud, with many a sumptuous and stately pile. But, ah! what humiliating sorrow did I feel, how quickly did every spark of the pride incident to humanity subside, on beholding the fallen state of Ghizni! In vain did I look for its "gorgeous palaces and cloud capt towers." They had been long levelled with the dust, and save some scattered masses of mishapen ruins, not a monument is to be seen of Ghizni's former grandeur. The town stands on a hill of moderate height, at the foot of which runs a small river,* whose borders are occupied by some fruit gardens. Its slender existence is now maintained by some Hindoo families, who support a small traffick, and supply the wants of a few Mahometan residents.

At a short distance from Ghizni, stands the tomb of Mahmoud, where pilgrims resort from distant places to say their prayers. But as the religious acts of such emigrants are rated by the degree of labour, length or danger of their journies, we are not to suppose that the pilgrimage improves either their heads or their hearts: though few moral benefits may accrue to the devotee from his wanderings, he derives from them a considerable portion of secular advantage. The Hadji, so he is

* Its current passes to the west or southward, but I am not acquainted with its name.

entitled,

entitled, who has made the tour of Mecca, and visited the tomb of his prophet, is ever after treated with a respectful deference, for it is the top of Mahometan fashion to be religious; and if a mendicant, his scrip never wants a store.

IN mentioning Mahmoud and Ghizni, it were criminal to omit the name of the Persian poet, Fardousi, who in his *Sha Namah*, hath given us a splendid monument of epic poetry, and the pure language of his country. The protection of the great doth not always fall to the poet's lot; nor but rarely doth the public munificence enable him to indulge the bent of his genius. Gripping want often drives him to seek the hireling's pittance, and even in our enlightened land, we have seen the cold hand of penury press him to the grave. More propitious was the fortune of Ferdousi: it gave him an imperial patron in Mahmoud, whose praise he too lavishly sung. And when, for some failure of the prince's promise, the poet retired into Persia, his countrymen warmly vied in manifesting their liberality and applause.

THE climate of Ghizni is so cold as to have become proverbial, and the Afghans told me, that the town was more than once been overwhelmed in snow. The road to Ghizni has, I apprehend, a south west direction, and is distant from Kabul eighty two miles, at the rate of four miles to a fursung. I have been the more induced to notice this fact circumstantially; as in our maps its distance and course from Kabul is erroneously laid down; some

of the French geographers, even place it to the westward of Kandahar.

IN the morning of the 27th of September, at Heer Ghut, five fursungs. The country is interspersed with low hills, and produces, except in some few cultivated spots, little else than a prickly aromatic weed, on which camels feed with avidity; and which with paste of unsifted barley formed into balls, constitutes their common food. This animal is peculiarly useful in countries where, as in Afghanistan, the roads are level, the soil dry, and provender, from the thin population, generally scarce. The camel even on much coarser fare than has been mentioned, endures severe fatigue, often carrying a load of eight hundred English pounds; and has so tractable a temper, that eight of them fastened to each other in a string, are managed by two men. When oppressed with thirst on the road, a camel throws from its stomach a fleshy substance of a purple colour, which either returns a supply of water that has been previously deposited, or being put into friction in the mouth, yields such moisture as gives it occasional relief.

ON the 27th, our party halted at the instance of Dowran wholly; that is, without the previous assent of the old lady, who inveighed against his presumption with such bitterness and so loudly, that stopping his ears, he ran off the field. You will please to observe, that the places noted as halting stations, take their name either from some adjacent fort, or if in an uninhabited country, from some peculiar aspect or quality they may possess.

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ON the 29th, at Meercoot, fix fursungs. The air had become now so cold, that at this period of the year, and in a latitude between thirty-four and thirty-five, the water which was suspended in a copper vessel from my camel, became solidly frozen during the night.

ON the 30th, at Mufhiedah, in a desert, fix fursungs. In traversing so inhospitable a tract, little matter of information or amusement can occur to the traveller. But had he been journeying over a land stored with every gift and every beauty of nature, a companion like mine would have destroyed his joy and have converted his Eden to a desert. The nurse of the crying child was the immediate reverse of an handsome woman; on this score she was not responsible, and had she been moderately clean, I had no right to complain, and might even have derived entertainment from her talk which flowed with a strong current. But trusting wholly to this qualification for a passage through life, she seemed to despise every other care. Her hair was a complicated maze of filth, which had never I believe been explored by comb, and from whose close vicinity I received a severe visitation; nor was her face while I knew her, once touched by water.

ON the first of November, at Tazee, five fursungs, in a barren track. The air became now very hot in the day, and cold at night.

ON the 2d, at Killaut, a fort on an eminence, fix fursungs. This quarter of Afghanistan has the general aspect of a desert; and

and except some small portions of arable land contiguous to the places of habitation no other cultivation is seen.

On the 23d at Teer Andazee, six fursungs. The night air, hitherto cold and bleak, became at this place mild, and the heat of the day oppressive.

On the 4th at Potee, a small village, situate in a populous and fertile district. Potee lies to the right of the Kandahar road, but holding some dependance on our Afghan lady, the two camels that carried the family and me, were dispatched, for her accommodation, to that place, where she was received with much respect. Whether the old lady had imagined, that the humble predicament in which I stood, would deter me from any attempt to fully the honor of her family, or that she had noticed in me, a total indifference to all its motions, I know not, but the truth was, she made as little account of me, as if I had been wholly incapacitated from entailing on it any disgrace. Nor, did I, so temperate had my constitution become, from the predominance of other pursuits, feel the least mortification at the treatment.

On the 5th in an open well cultivated plain, six fursungs, where halting for a few hours, the kafilah proceeded two and a half fursungs farther to Kandahar. This city, comprised within an ordinary fortification of about three miles in circumference, and of a square form, is populous and flourishing. And lying
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in the great road, which connects India with Persia and Tartary, has been long a distinguished mart.

At Kandahar, are established many Hindoo families, chiefly of Moultan and the Rajepoot districts, who by their industry and mercantile knowledge, have essentially augmented its trade and wealth. The Turcoman merchants of Bochara and Samarkand, also frequent this mart, whence they transport into their own country a considerable quantity of indigo, with which commodity Kandahar is annually supplied from various parts of upper India. This city is more abundantly supplied with provisions and at a cheaper rate, than any place I have seen on the west side of the Indus. The grapes and melons of numerous kinds are peculiarly high flavoured, and are comparable with the first fruits of Europe. The extensive range of shops occupied by Hindoo traders, with the ease and contentment expressed in their deportment, affords a fair testimony of their enjoying at Kandahar, liberty and protection.

A son of Timur Shah governs the city with a tract of dependant territory, which produces it is said, a revenue of eighteen lacks of rupees; and it may be justly concluded from the appearance of all classes of people, that this collection is made without any extraordinary rigour. The environs of Kandahar occupy an extensive plain, covered with fruit gardens and cultivation, which are intersected with numerous streams, of so excellent a quality as to become proverbial; and the climate is happily

happily tempered, between the heats of India and the cold of Ghizni.

It is generally supposed in Europe that Kandahar stands in a country of mountains, and we speak of the lofty passes of Kandahar, as a point not less clearly ascertained than the existence of the Alps. Permit me to rectify this popular error, which, like many of a similar texture, has made mountains of mole-hills, and acquaint you that the face of the country surrounding the new city of Kandahar, forms an extensive plain, which as it approaches the site of the old fortress, becomes interspersed with hills; but they are of a moderate height; nor, do they form any barrier of difficult access or deep extent.

On leaving Kabul, Bagdasir, my Georgian host, had given me introductory letters to two Turkish residents of Kandahar; the one kept a small shop in the bazar, the other, Aga Ahmed, had a warehouse of some note in the karavansera. This person received me in a courteous manner, and though then in the character of a Christian, I did not experience any of that haughtiness of manner, with which Mahometans usually regard those of our faith. He even directed his countryman the shopkeeper, to provide the necessaries for my journey, and to carefully guard against any fraud.

THE immediate departure of a kafilah, and the fast approach of winter, when the road to Persia is impassable, determined me to proceed to Herat; though I wished much for a few days residence

fidence at Kandahar. Aga Ahmed made an agreement with the *kafilah bashi* * for my passage, and also that I should be furnished with an attendant: this benevolent Turk did not formally recommend me to the director's care, but enjoined him on the forfeiture of his favor to shew me a particular kindness, which was only to be testified by producing my written assurance. Could I have found a fit associate to divide the cares of house-keeping, I would have remained at Kandahar, during the winter, as I still felt the effects of the late sickness, and feared a relapse from the fatigue of travelling; but the predicament in which I stood, wholly precluded any domestic connection with the Mahometans; and that of some stray Armenians, whom I found there, did not seem eligible.

THE road from Ghizni to Kandahar, according to my gross observations, tends to the south-west; and the country has generally a barren aspect, with a scanty supply of wood and water. The buildings from a scarcity of timber, are constructed as in the Kabul districts, of sun-burnt bricks, and covered with a flat arched roof of the like materials.

ON the 8th of November left Kandahar, and proceeded to Koby, three furlongs, a small village surrounded by a fertile plain. At the distance of two or three miles to the northward

* *Bashi* in the Turkish language signifies head, and is often applied in Persia to the head of a society or party.

of Kandahar, is seen on the left the remains of the old fortress, standing on the summit of a rocky hill of a moderate height, but abrupt elevation. The road at this place tends over a stony ascent of easy access, skirted on each side with scattered hills and wide intervals of level land. It is the form of this part of Afghanistan, which has given rise, I apprehend, to the European belief of the mountains and passes of Kandahar.

ON the 9th, at Auskuckana, three fursungs, a small village on a thinly cultivated plain. Our slow progress was occasioned by the kafilah bashi remaining at the city to adjust some business; he had however wholly neglected mine, for not a person when my sect was known, would even touch my garment.

My ill fortune on the score of an associate, which seemed to pursue me with an inveterate rigor, had now given me in the place of the scolding nurse and crying child, a theological and very clamorous disputant. This bewildered man, unhappily for himself and for his neighbours, had conned over some of those books of ingenious devices and quaint syllogisms, which are held in high note among the modern Mahometans, and have fixed among them a false distorted taste. Even Hafis's poems, so conspicuously replete with wit, and with incitements to mere mortal pleasures, are tortured by them into praises of Mahomet and his religion. This fanatical logician was unknown to the other passengers, but he lost no time in displaying to them his
store

store of endowments, and seeing me a favorable subject he directed his full force at my head.

I HAD engaged the services of a travelling Arab taylor, and was anticipating the various conveniencies which they promised, when he was driven from the prospect of an easy livelihood by the threats of the logician, who denounced Mahomet's vengeance against him if he eat the bread of an infidel. The poor man, hungry, and almost naked, started at the danger, and fearful of incurring so powerful a wrath, resigned his new office, and went to live as it might please god. Thus had I the dreary prospect of being pestered for the term of twenty days by this outrageous Mahometan, who so far from being conscious of any mischief, believed that he was performing an act of extensive merit.

ON the evening of the 10th, the kafilah moved, and arrived the next morning at Howrah Muddit Khan,* six fursungs, the country open, and the soil, a mixture of light sand and earth, producing generally that species of weed which has been noted in the remarks of the road from Kabul to Kandahar.

ON the 13th, at Khackchamparah, six fursungs. No marks of habitation were seen during the journey of these two last days.

ON the 14th, at Greishk, seven fursungs, a larged walled village, on the skirts of which runs a small stream of good water ;

* Howrah signifies an artificial fountain or reservoir of water ; one of which had been constructed at this place by Muddit Khan, for the accommodation of travellers.

halted two days at this place, where a toll is collected on merchandize and passengers, and where a stock of provisions was laid in to supply our consumption, through a tract of desert country extending from this station to the westward. My persecuting neighbour, had already deprived me of two servants, when after much intreaty, mixed with a warm eulogium on his extensive capacity, I prevailed on him to moderate his resentment against me, and cease to anathematise those, who might in future be induced from their necessity to eat the bread of an infidel. He had by his rhetoric, precluded me even from the use of a barber; one of whom being observed by him at the close of an operation on my head, was reprobated for his impurity in virulent language, and compelled to cleanse his razor by an ordeal process, the expence of which was defrayed by Christian-money. On paying the charge, I observed to our logician, whom I now treated with little ceremony, that he should also cause the shaver to purge the money by the like trial, that he might not be polluted by the touch; a precaution I added, that would doubtless have been adopted, but for a fear of half the amount being lost in the large alloy that debases all Mahometan coins. I was, he said, an incorrigible Kafir, whom ill fortune had placed with him on the same camel, and which he feared could never thrive under such a weight of sin.

THE urgent calls of hunger now gave me a third servant, who was in his way from Moultan, to make the pilgrimage of Muschid.*

chid.* Think how ardent must have been the zeal which incited this pilgrim to so distant a journey, and supported him against the inclemency of winter, and the inhospitality of a rude people, with scarcely a covering to his back, no shoes to his feet, or an atom of money in his purse. Though I gave him some warm clothing and substantial food, he was not able to keep pace with our party.

His successor was a Kashmirian, who had a countenance as demure as that of Gil Blas's Ambrose Lamela, and to the extent of his ability, as great a rogue. To enhance the value of his services, for which I was obliged to pay largely, he expatiated on the sin he was about to commit, eating the salt of an infidel; but I soon found there was no restriction to his diet. Most of the Asiatic nations have affixed to salt a certain sacred property, but it is held in the highest degree of reverence by the Mahometans, who speak of salt as Europeans do of bread. A servant is said to eat the salt of his master, and when guilty of ingratitude, he is stigmatized with the name of a Nimmock Haram, or a polluter of his salt, which is, I believe, the only term applied by Mahometan nations to such an offender.

HERE I am induced to notice the ominous qualities vulgarly ascribed on some occasions to salt in our own country; as when it is accidentally spilled, some part is thrown over the left shoulder,

* It is at this day the reputed capital of Khorasan,

that

that the supposed ensuing evil may be averted; a ceremony I have seen even observed by those who were far removed from the lower classes of life. But early impressions are not easily effaced, and they often impart to the ideas a lasting colour; especially amongst those who are secluded from the more hackneyed paths of the world.

ON the 17th, at Shah Nadir, a station in the desert, seven fursungs. This reservoir built by Nadir Shah, is a square of about twenty feet, over which is erected on pillars a terrace, which extending beyond the margin of the water, affords a convenient lodging to travellers.

ON the 18th at Shorab* five fursungs; some spots of cultivation were scattered around this station, but no village in sight.

ON the 19th at Lungherah, a place of halt, in a desert country, where we found only one weak spring of water, which was quickly consumed.

ON the 20 at Dilaram, six fursungs, a fort in ruins which is skirted by a rivulet, on whose margin are seen some scattering trees; a rare sight in this land! but, the adjacent country is barren and uninhabited.

ON the 21st, at Buckwau, seven fursungs, a station in the desert.

ON the 22d, at Drauze in the desert, six fursungs.—This day

* Signifying salt or brackish water, but at this station the water was fresh.

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the sun shot forth its rays with great force, and the ground which we occupied being a bare sand, reflected an intense heat. Whilst I was panting under a very flimsy covering, I observed that my neighbour, a Turkoman Seid, who had no shelter, was struck by the sun, and lay struggling in a violent agony.

THE Mahometans thought him possessed with the devil, and instead of affording any proper aid, began an extraordinary conversation with the supposed fiend; especially my learned associate who in a peremptory manner, ordered the devil to depart out of the body of a true believer, and a branch of the holy stock; but, seeing that the command had no effect, though conveyed in Arabic and a vehement tone of voice, I requested to interfere; and lifting the incumbent from the ground, threw some water on his face, and forcibly poured a quantity down his throat. The Seid soon felt the natural benefit of this administration; but the violence of the shock created a temporary stupefaction, during which he uttered so incoherent a language that it confirmed the opinion that a demon was speaking, and not the Tartar.

OUR Logician addressed the infernal personage in a very spirited harangue, severely reprehending his entrance into the body of one of the prophet's descendants, and challenging him, that the cloven foot might conspicuously appear, to repeat the Mahometan creed. To this test the shattered state of the Seid's senses were not yet equal; nor, was it until he had smoked his pipe,

pipe, that he distinctly, with surrounding applause, pronounced his creed and shook off diabolical connection.

ON the 23d, at Ghuznow in the desert, five furlongs. This evening my persecuting companion left our party and proceeded with some Hindoo Traders to Fera, an Afghan town of some note, lying about forty or fifty miles to the south-west of Drauze. But, my joy at this riddance, like most joys of sublunary texture, was of short duration; for the vacant place fell to the lot of a much more obnoxious associate.

I BEGIN now to be ashamed at having imposed upon you so large a portion of private story; yet, without it, I perceive my subject would be as barren as the land I travel over; which exhibits to the fatigued eye, one vast sterile plain, without rivers, wood, or scarcely a place of human habitation. Though personal recitals are usually suspected of vanity, and even in their best sense partake more of the amazing than the instructive qualities, you may perhaps gather from my anecdotes, some subsidiary knowledge of the human character, an important subject, and not less various than the human face. My next associate was the Arab taylor, already mentioned, who succeeded to the vacant pannier by the assistance of one of his countrymen in our party, a trader of some note. A conversation held when I was thought asleep, some nights before, between the logician and the taylor; in which the latter was strenuously exhorted to rob me, boded no good from the change; and this counsel was strengthened by

by a doctrine, very prevalent among the lower classes of Mahometans, that it is meritorious and laudable to attack the property of an infidel. Nor was the advice lost on the taylor, who promised an active diligence in performing the required service. Combining therefore the interest of the world with that of his religion, he commenced a brisk attack on my chattels; but, which at that time my vigilance preserved. His subsequent attempts however were more successful, as were seen in the diminution of my apparel. This freebooting system of the taylor's kept me in constant alarm, and displayed every day in stronger colours, the ill consequences of my Christian garb.

ON the 24th, at Ghiraunee, six fursungs. A populous walled village, situate near a small running water. Halted there the next day to make the payment of a toll, and purchase provisions for a three days journey over a desert, which reaches from this place to the confines of Khorasan. My Kashmirian servant was wholly divested of religious fervor or a religious cloak. For he neither prayed nor washed; but, was much addicted to theft; and while the taylor purloined my cloths, he was occupied in stealing my victuals. Yet this propensity was, in some degree, compensated by his services, which found active employment in bringing water and fuel, baking cakes, and boiling my coffee.

ON the 27th, at Khoos, in the desert, five fursungs. The taylor's payments for conveyance not being regularly made, the seat was again put up to sale, when it was purchased by an Hin-

doftany Mahometan, who had left his wife and family at Juanpour, in the diftrict of Benares, and was thus far advanced on a pilgrimage to Mufchid. From the mouth of this devotee, who had formerly been a marauding foldier, there iffued an almoft inceffant ejaculation of prayer. In truth it may be faid, that he overflowed in holy zeal, for he prayed and cried in a fucceffive rotation ; what an extraordinary character would this be thought in a country where its inhabitants, though fhunning no peril or fatigue in the purfuit of wealth and pleafure, will fcarcely crofs a ftreet to look into a Church. The various precepts of education and religion, eftablifhed in the world, but, efpecially, the different orders of government, produce fo ftrong a diflimilarity in the manners of men, that in investigating thofe of the moft oppofite tendency, they would feem to arife from beings of a diftinct fpecies.

ON the 28th, at Gimmuch, feven fursungs, a ftation in the defert.

ON the 29th, at Ouckal, a large walled village, ftanding within the limit of the province of Khorafan, and inhabited wholly by Perfians. It is proper here to obferve, that the natives of Perfia proper, particularly the foldiery, are often termed at home, as in foreign countries, Kuzzel Bach ; a Turkish compound, fignifying, I am informed, red head, and originating from the Perfian cap, being covered at the top with red cloth.

ON the 30th, a halt.

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ON the 31st, at Sheerbuchsh, a desert station, six fursungs.

ON the 1st of November, at Zearut Ghah, seven fursungs. A small village, on the skirts of which are seen the remains of some tombs or religious edifices.

ON the 2nd, at the city of Herat, three fursungs. The road from Kandahar to Gimmuch leads to the west or west by north ; from thence to Herat, it has I apprehend, nearly a northern course, yet I cannot account for the sudden deviation of the track. The country is generally open, and interspersed with barren rocky hills of a moderate height. The soil is light and sandy, producing naturally little else than the aromatic weed before noted.

THE city of Herat stands on a spacious plain, which is intersected with many springs of running water, some of which are supplied with bridges ; and the numerous villages surrounded with plantations, must afford a pleasant view to the traveller, whose eye has been wearied with the deserts of Afghanistan.

THE director of the kafilah carried us to the karavanserah, where passengers only are lodged ; the other places of this description, being all occupied by resident traders. In this square of the karavansera, I perceived an Armenian, whom I informed with little ceremony, lest he should hear a less favourable story, that I was an European, returning from India into my own country : but, for greater personal security, I had assumed the name of an Armenian. And to quiet any suspicion of the truth of my relation, I produced a letter, which the Georgian, Bagdasir, had writ-

ten in my favour to an Armenian, who lived in a village about forty miles from Herat. My address was closed by observing, that though not in want of money, I stood in great need of his friendly offices, as he must be well aware of the various difficulties affecting those of our sect, especially when alone, among so bigotted a people as those of Khorasan. The Armenian heard the little oration, which all my powers of speech had pointed at him, with a resolute coolness, and perceiving, I suppose, that my acquaintance would yield no profit, he turned from me and went away, without even expressing the common terms of civility. The frequent occasions which have occurred to me of noticing the Armenian character, soon cooled my resentment, and enabled me to reconcile the wariness and apathy of this man, with the common principles which govern his sect.

THE present race of Armenians, like the Jews, are with little exception occupied in commerce, chiefly in its smallest branches, and having long lost with their country the spirit of patriotism, divested also of any valuable attainments of knowledge, they exhibit but a faint discrimination of character; being generally industrious, servile and dishonest; they are scattered over various parts of Turkey, Persia, and India, where except in the English colonies, they live on a precarious sufferance, being often on trivial pretences, insulted, oppressed and plundered. To palliate the evils inherent to their situation, and create a substitute for powers, honors, and national importance, they pursue the different

ferent roads of traffick with unremitting ardor, and invariably measure their pleasures by the mere extent of their wealth. Little susceptible of friendship, they are rarely induced to afford even among themselves mutual assistance, or disposed to promote the enjoyment of society: the Armenians at this day are divided into two general classes; the one the most numerous, established in the Turkish dominions; the other in Persia.

THE city of Jolfa, contiguous to Ispahan, was expressly founded for the accommodation of the Armenians, by Shah Abbas, who aware of the benefits that would accrue to his kingdom, from a commercial and temperate people, gave them an ample protection, and many indulgencies. He permitted them it is said to accompany their adventures to foreign countries, and advanced a capital to those not already opulent, but he always kept their families at Jolfa in pledge of good conduct. The Indian Armenians are of the Jolfa colony, and from an actual residence in that city, or sprung from families originally settled there, are all conversant in the Persian language. The vicinity of the Persian gulf, which has long maintained an important trade with India, naturally allured the Armenians to a region, which at once held out to them the hope of speedy opulence, and the advantages of a temperate government. Nor did they ever think of returning into Persia; but having amassed a sufficient wealth, purchased the release of their families on the payment of large sums.

FROM

FROM the description given of the Armenian character, which I am not conscious of having in the least overcharged, you will not be surprized at the mode in which I was received by my brother Christian at Herat. But I now determined to slide into the Mahometan community, on the first fair occasion ; seeing that without adding one benefit, I was like to become a martyr to our faith. In all parts of the city which I frequented, I was known only as a Mahometan, except in the karavanfera, where I experienced unceasing insult and derision ; for the Persians affect a greater scruple in communicating with those of a different religion, than any other sect of Mahometans. I was not even permitted to draw water out of a common well, but ordered to place my vessel on the ground, which was filled, by a person hired for the purpose, from a height and not touched. When I have been waiting for this supply, the town boys who in their round of diversion, would occasionally take our karavanfera in their way, learning that I was an impure person, used to form a circle round me, and desired to have the unclean part shewn to them, and seemed much disappointed, on being told that I was unclean all over. My journey hitherto, if not productive of other advantage, has corrected my former belief of Mahometan politeness and suavity of manners, and also I trust, qualified that insolence of carriage, which I have too frequently evinced to the inhabitants of our eastern territories.

COULD one of our Indian grandees in the fullness of his
power,

power, seated in a palanquin, perhaps on an elephant, surrounded with those bands of stickmen and pikemen, who disperse every man and beast that dares to cross his way: Could this personage be transported on the sudden to Herat, how speedily would he be divested of his plumes, and reduced to his simple value. Whenever I quitted the purlieu of my lodging, I became a grave hypocritical Mussulman, with the enjoyment of all his privileges; and the city containing a various description of people, there was little apprehension of a discovery. I daily frequented the eating-houses, where all the talk of the day is circulated, and chiefly fabricated, in conjunction with the barber's shop, which in Herat, has a neat appearance. In the centre of it stands a small stone pillar, on the top of which is placed a cup of water, in readiness for operation, and the sides of the shop are decorated with looking glasses, razors, and beard combs. Home having no pleasures for me, I was glad to seek them abroad; nor did I fail in procuring equal amusement and information. Neither Afghanistan or the northern provinces of Persia, permit the residence of courtezans, or any women that dance or sing for the public entertainment. The northern Persians affect to express an abhorrence of the Indian Mahometans, whom they reprobate for a general depravity of manners, and a neglect of religious duties, yet this temperate and demure people are much defamed, if under their mysterious carriage of body, they do not practice in their different vocations, every species of deceit and knavery.

knavery. In India, it is a well known fact, that the Moguls; a denomination given there to all foreign Mahometans, throw off their northern cloke, and becoming notorious debauchees, laugh to scorn the precepts of their doctors.

HERAT is a smaller city than Kandahar, but maintains a respectable trade; and the market-place occupying a long street, covered with an arched roof, is filled with shops of various wares. Bread, rice, and flesh meats, with numerous fruits and vegetables, are equally cheap and abundant; and the grand market, held once a week, is so crowded with the produce of the neighbouring villages, that a passage through it is difficult and fatiguing. Coarse woollens of a strong texture are manufactured in the adjacent districts, a great part of which made into garments, are exported into various parts of northern Persia; furtouts of sheepskin with the wool in the inside, are seen hanging at almost every shop, and are used by all classes of people in the winter season. A small quantity of European commodities is brought to this city from the gulf of Persia, consisting of French broad cloths, cutlery, small looking glasses, and prints; but their low prices shew that the demand is very limited. The police of Herat is judiciously regulated, and the administration of justice vigorous. Two men, apparently above the ordinary class, having been convicted of theft, were suspended by the heels from a dome, which stands in the centre of the market, where they remained near an hour, to the terror of a gazing populace; having witnessed

nessed a part of this exhibition, I returned to my lodging with the interested belief that my property, which was all in specie, concealed about my person, had derived from it an additional security.

ON exchanging some gold at this place, I found the rate more favourable than at Kandahar or Kabul; yet still one in sixteen less than the Indian value. Though I was unremittingly cautious in concealing my money, knowing that a discovery would bring an host of enemies on my head, one of my travelling acquaintances, suddenly opened the door of my apartment at Herat, a very unusual practice among Asiatics, and found me examining the state of my finances. At the sight of the gold spread on the floor, he was struck with surprize, and expressed an eager curiosity to know the occupation, that had procured me so much wealth. But either my speedy departure from Herat, or a more than ordinary honesty in the Persian, prevented the ill consequence which I had apprehended from the imprompt visit,

KHORASAN,* the most eastern the largest, as well as the most important province of Persia, participated the various and severe revolutions which affected the state of the kingdom, from the dissolution of the Grecian dynasty, until the end of the ninth century, when it was involved in the Tartar dominion of the

* Khor in the ancient Persic, it is said, signifies the last.—Sir William Jones.

Sammani race ; and in the beginning of the sixteenth century, after having experienced a succession of Tartar and Arabian rulers, it was annexed to Persia by Ismael, surnamed Sofi, from whom the appellation of Sofi has been given in Europe to the Persian kings.

HERAT had continued the principal city of Khorasan, until the succession of Ismael, who bestowed the pre-eminence on Muschid, from its containing the tomb of Moozau Reza, his supposed ancestor, and one of the twelve grand Imaums or priests of the Persians. Since Muschid became the capital of Khorasan, it has been enriched by large donations of the Mahometans of the sect of Ali, generally known by the name of Schiahs. Even Nadir Shah, the least disposed of the Persian kings to ecclesiastical endowments, ornamented a mosque, which had been built over the tomb of Moozau Reza, with a massy cabinet of silver and a spacious lamp of the same metal.

THE religion of the koran had existed throughout the vast Mahometan empire, for the space of nine hundred years without any essential change, when it experienced a severe blow from the intrepidity of Ismael and rapid success of his arms. In the course of the first periods of Mahometanism, four Arabian doctors, Malek, Ambel, Hanneifa and Shaffee, made commentaries on the original text, which were adopted by sects, now severally distinguished by the names of commentators. But these explanations do not appear to have militated with much force against the

the

the first system, or created any violent feuds among the different sectaries.

As the grand innovation of the Mahometan religion was effected in Persia, and chiefly exists in that region, I am induced to make a brief chronological review of some of its more important epochs, previously to this event. It is seen that the Tartar Arsáces, having expelled the princes who succeeded to the conquest of Alexander, established a dynasty, which flourished for the space of four hundred and fifty years, and which in the two hundred and twenty sixth year of the Christian æra was extinguished, in the person of Artabanes, by Ardeshere,* the Artaxerxes of the Greeks, said to have been descended from the ancient race of Persian kings.

SHOULD it be found, which I am induced to believe, that the Persians and the Parthians are a distinct people, it is not improbable that the nations which ancient history denominates Parthians, were composed of the Tartars of the Arsacian dynasty, which held a long possession of Persia, and maintained such fierce conflicts with the Roman empire. The dexterity of the archers, which constituted the strength of the Parthian cavalry, and an excursive rapid manner of fighting, which was represented as most formidable when they appeared to fly from

* The successors of this prince were denominated Sassanides, from Sassan the father of Ardeshere.

battle, corresponds closely with the military practice of the modern Tartars; in contradistinction to the other nations of northern Asia.

THE Arabians carried their conquests and their religion into Persia, in six hundred and fifty one of our æra, from which time it remained subject to the khaliphat, until the middle of the eleventh century, when it was overrun and subdued by Jogrul Beg, a Turkoman prince of the Seljukian* race. The successors of Jogrul, continued to govern certain quarters of Persia in the year 1187, when the last prince of that race was conquered by Amalek Dinar, who in his turn fell under the power of Jakash, the Turkoman prince of Kharasm. But in 1218 of our æra, the Kharasmian empire, the Arabian khalifat with the grandest portion of the eastern world were swallowed up in the power of Jenjis Khan, whose posterity held possession of Persia, for the space of one hundred and seventy-four years, though ultimately rent into small principalities by a series of intestine wars. It became after that period, an appendage to the dominion of Timur, and appears to have acknowledged in separate governments, a general dependance on certain branches of his family, until the year 1499, when Ismael Sofi, taking up

* So named from Seljuk his grandfire, who occupied a private station in the vicinity of Samarkand, where he held large landed possessions.

arms.

arms against the Tartar princes, rose by a quick succession of victory, and assumed the undivided throne of Persia.

It is seen in Knolles's very estimable history of the Turks, that Ismael was the son of Hyder, surnamed from the place of his birth, or the residence of his youth, Ardebil, and that he was honourably descended. Retiring from the occupations of the world, Hyder fixed his abode in the city of Tauris, where he passed an austere contemplative life, and was held by the inhabitants of that quarter in great veneration. The fame of his character, soon procured him the name of a prophet, and caused multitudes of people to resort to him from all parts of Persia and Armenia. The more to seduce the multitude, ever delighted with novelty, he began to inveigh against the doctrine of the Mahometans, which enjoins a sacred remembrance of the three* first successors of their prophet, and to revive the opinions of a certain preceding dervish named Guini, who was known also by the designation of Sofi. He asserted as if inspired from above, that none should enter the kingdom of heaven, but those of the sect of Ali, who was the genuine heir and associate of Mahomet; and ordained, that the memory of Abubucker, Omar, and Osman should be held accursed. The king of Persia, whom Knolles calls Assymbeius Ulan Cassanes,†

to

* Abubucker, Omar, and Osman.

† It is seriously regretted that the Greek and Roman writers, as also many of the
moderns,

to strengthen his government and acquire popularity, invited Hyder to court, and gave him his daughter in marriage, from which sprung Ismael. Being now brought forward on a more conspicuous theatre; Hyder grew into the general estimation of the people, which alarming the fears of Jacob the son of Hussan, who had succeeded to the kingdom, he secretly put him to death.

ISMAEL flying from the power of Jacob, took refuge with the chief of a small territory, on the southern borders of the Caspian sea, named Pырchales.* Some of the friends of Hyder retired at the same time into lesser Armenia, then subject to the Turks, where they promulgated their doctrine with success. Their disciples were distinguished by a red band tied over the turban, whence it is said they first obtained the appellation of Kussel Bash, which in the Turkish language, as has been already noticed, signifies red head. Ismael during

moderns, have not delivered to us the literal names of men and places, which occur in their history of foreign nations. This want of accuracy, or rather the impulse of an absurd vanity, has involved the European histories of Asia, in a maze of obscurity; those especially which represented the series of warfare maintained against Persia by the states of Greece, and ultimately the conquest of that empire by Alexander of Macedon. The name given by Knolles to the Persian king, taken from some latin records, is evidently a misnomer, as no such denomination is now in use among the Mahometans, and we know that no change has affected their names, since the first establishment of the khalifat. His regal title, being a Tartar, might have been Azim Beg, signifying a great lord or prince, and his domestic appellation, Hussan Caffim.

* So expressed by Knolles.

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his retirement advanced, with zeal, the tenets of his father, and being by nature conspicuously eloquent, of a penetrating genius and austere life, of a comely person and invincible courage, was by the vulgar, counted more than human. The nobles of the neighbouring country, allured by the endowments of Ismael, and the specious novelty of his doctrine, resorted to his place of abode, with offers of support; and, though seeming to shun them, he was invested with authority, honors and wealth. In token of his rare qualifications and a belief in his power of prophecy, Ismael received the title of Sofi, "which, faith Knolles" signifyeth among these people, a wise man, or the interpreter of the Gods."*

THE death of Jacob, which must have happened at an early period of his reign, and the tumults that ensued in Persia, then usurped by one Elvan Beg, who was also engaged in a warfare with his brother, named Morad, encouraged Ismael to urge his fortune on so promising a field. Obtaining some military aid from Pyrchaes, his first protector, he penetrated into Armenia, where he recovered the patrimony of his family, and was cordially received by those who had favored his father. Pursuing his success he penetrated into Shirvan, he took and sacked Shah Machee, the capital of the province, by the plunder of which

* This word I apprehend is purely of Greek origin; the Mahometans had at this period, been long conversant in Greek letters.

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he largely increased the numbers and hopes of his army. Elvan Beg had now expelled Morad, and was busied in punishing some of the principal citizens of Tauris, the capital of the kingdom, for having taken up arms in favor of his brother, when Ismael suddenly approaching the city, took it without opposition. Elvan deprived of other support, formed an alliance with his brother, but in his progress to form a junction with the army of Morad, he was vigorously attacked by Ismael, and slain in battle; the conqueror marched without delay against Morad, who was encamped at Babylon, and compelled him to fly into the Arabian desert:* he rose without a competitor to the throne of Persia.†

ISMAEL is perhaps the first prince, who at once conquered a spacious kingdom and the religious prejudices of its people. Nor does it appear that any of those violent commotions were excited, which usually mark the progress of ecclesiastical reformation. The system of Hyder and Ismael, was founded on the position that Mahomet had given his daughter Fatima to Ali, as a mark of the greatest affection, and bequeathed to him the succession of the khalifat. But, that in defiance of this sacred testament, Abubucker, one of the associated friends of Mahomet, setting aside the claims of Ali, had assumed the powers of government,

* Where he was cut off by domestic treachery.

† Ismael's accession happened about the year 1508.

which

which at his death, were also forcibly held in a consequent administration by Omar and Osman. But, that the injuries of Ali, having ultimately roused the divine interposition, he became the ruler of the Mussulmans.* This doctrine being unanimously received, Ismael ordained, that as the three first khaliphs were usurpers and sacrilegious violators of the last mandate of their prophet, their memory should, at the five stated times of prayer, be reprobated with every expression of contumely, and the severest vengeance of God denounced against them. He also inserted at the conclusion of the Mahometan creed, that Ali is the friend or the beloved of God, and directed that he and his posterity should be distinguished by appellation of imaums, or holy men.† In contradistinction to the Soonis, who in their prayers cross the hands on the lower part of the breast, the Schiahs drop their arms in straight lines; and as the Soonis at

* In commemoration of the four first successors of Mahomet, who were also his confidential associates, and by their enthusiastic courage, had been his grand instruments in aggrandizing the khaliphat, the general body of Mahometans, except the Persians, are often termed Char Yaree, or those of the four friends. They are likewise called Soonis, an Arabic word, signifying the followers of the right path.

† The real number consists of eleven persons, to which a twelfth, supposed yet to come, has been added; their names are Ali, Hussen and Husseyn, his sons, Zyne-ul-Abedein, Mahomet Baukur, Jaffier Sadue, Moufa Kazim, Ali Moufa Befa, Mahomet Tuckee, Ali Nughee, Hussen Ansary and Mahomet Mhedy. The titles bestowed usually on Ali are, Ameer-ul-Momenein, Mortiz Ali and Hyder. This last denomination signifying a lion, is particularly given to Ali, when his military exploits are rehearsed. But when the profoundest respect is expressed for his memory, he is entitled Ameer-ul-Momenein, or lord of the faithful.

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certain periods of the prayer, press their forehead on the ground or a carpet, the sectaries of Ali lay on the spot which the head reaches, a small tile of white clay, impressed with characters sacred to the memory of Ali.

SOME classes of the Schiahs believe that Ali was an incarnation of the deity, who perceiving they say, the mission which had been delegated on Mahomet to be incomplete, assumed the person of this khaliph, for the purpose of fixing the Moslem faith and power on a firmer basis. The Schiahs have imbibed strong religious prejudices, are more inflamed with the zeal of devotion, and consequently less tolerant to the other sects than the Soonis. In Persia, they do not permit a Sooni to eat at their board, and in common language, without provocation or heat of temper, they call him an infidel. But in what light, dear Sir, will you view a numerous and a civilized people, who have produced writings that would exalt the name of the most polished nations, yet in solemn deliberate expression, imprecate God's wrath five times a day, on the souls and ashes of three men who never did them an injury, and who in their day, advanced the empire of Mahomet to a high pitch of glory and power. Not appeased with uttering the keenest reproaches against the memory of these khaliphs, they pour a torrent of abuse on every branch of their families, male and female, lower even than the seventh generation. I have seen their imagination tortured with inventing terms of reproach on these men and their posterity, and commit verbally every act of lewdness with
their

their wives, daughters, and the progeny down to the present day. The Soonis, though aware of this unvaried ceremony of execrating the memory of men, whom they have been long taught to hold in reverence, and that they themselves are stigmatized as infidels, do not even, when fully empowered, intemperately resent this persecuting spirit of the Persians.

IN the division of Khorasan, subject to the Afghan empire, the Persians enjoy a fair portion of civil and religious liberty, and are rarely treated with insults.

IN noticing the more liberal opinions of the Soonis, in the practice of their religion, I am brought to the recollection of an occurrence, which places this fact in a conspicuous point of view.

AN Armenian merchant from Ispahan, accompanying an adventure of some value, came to the karavanera in Kabul, where I lodged; and though five of his countrymen were on the spot, the other residents being Jews, Mahometans and Hindoos, not one of them advanced to give him welcome or an offer of assistance; and to augment his embarrassment, all the apartments of the serauce were occupied. In this predicament stood the Armenian, and he must have lain in the street, had not a Turk invited this forlorn Christian into his own apartment; and he fed him also at his own board. One of the Armenian tribe, after some days, taking shame, perhaps from the Mahometan example, or expecting some advantage from the cargo

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of his countryman, tendered him a part of his habitation, which the stranger at first refused; nor did he accept the invitation, until seriously admonished of the crime of forming so close a connection with an infidel.

It is now time to revert to my own story, and inform you, that it had been my first intention to have proceeded from Herat to Reshd, the principal town of the Ghilan province, which lies a few miles inland from Inzellee, a Russian factory on the border of the Caspian sea. It is a computed journey of seventy days, of about twenty miles each, from this city to Reshd,* but the road which leads through the lesser Irak,† has a deviating course from the direct line.

BEING informed by the Armenians of Herat, that Russian vessels navigate along the coast of Mazanderan, to which a straight track lay from hence, though not much frequented from being subject to the depredation of the Turcoman Tartars, I was resolved to pursue this route, at once direct and wholly unknown to European travellers.

A KAFILAH being about to proceed to Turshish, a town lying in the direction of Mazanderan, I made an agreement with the director for a conveyance; but with a confidential

* From Herat to the town of Jubbus, a route of fifteen days, thence to Yerd twenty-five; to Calhan ten, and a fifteen days journey to Reshd.

† There are two provinces of Irak, the lesser and greater; the latter, termed Irak Azeem, of which Bagdat is the capital, chiefly depends on Turkish and Arabian emirs.

stipulation,

stipulation, that I was to be received in a Mahometan character; and the better to guard against a discovery of my person, I took the name of an Arab, a people little known in this part of Persia, and the knowledge of whose language is confined only to some of the more learned priests.

SOME days before my departure from Herat, an Afghan Seid came into my apartment, and perceiving in the course of conversation that I was a Christian, he exclaimed with sensible emotions of joy, that he had now obtained a favorable opportunity of revenging the grievous injuries sustained by many of his holy ancestors at the hands of infidels, and that unless I paid a fine of five hundred rupees,* I must repeat the creed of Mahomet and be circumcised. Pretending an ignorance of the purpose of this demand, I carried the seid, with a mischievous intention I confess, to the next quarter, where the Armenian corps, four in number, were then assembled, and requested the principal of them, who spoke the Persian language with fluency, to explain the substance of the seid's demand; and this was precisely the point to which I wanted to reduce the question. When the hungry Afghan perceived, that instead of one Christian he had found five, his exultation had no bounds. He swore by his beard, that we should all incur the fine or circumcision. Oh! what a glorious fight, cried

* Such pecuniary assessment is termed Jayzeah, and is occasionally levied in Mahometan countries, on those who do not profess the faith of Mahomet.

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he, will be displayed to our prophet, when these hardened infidels, renouncing their herefy and impurities, shall become a portion of the faithful: what a triumph to our holy religion! The expedient which I had adopted, though not a fair, was for me a fortunate one; as the controversy, which became serious, was now more equal. The seid called loudly on the Mahometans in the name of the prophet, to assist in compelling the enemies of his religion either to embrace it, or by administering to the wants of his descendants, contribute to its support; the Persian residents of the karavansera endeavoured to assuage the Afghan's intemperance; but they quickly withdrew all interposition, on being told that the toleration of their doctrine was a greater indulgence, than the maintenance of their execrable tenets deserved. The seid experiencing however more obstinate resistance from the Christians than he had expected, it was evidently seen, that however ardent might have been his zeal for the advancement of religion, he was not the less mindful of his temporal welfare, and permitting himself, after displaying great powers in this holy war, to be soothed by the suppliant infidels, he withdrew his threats for a trifling sum of money; far disproportioned to the first demand. And here I must observe, that when I saw the resolute and judicious manner in which the principal Armenian conducted his share of the conflict, I felt a compunction for having involved him in so serious an embarrassment.

At Herat I found, in two karavanseras, about one hundred
Hindoo

Hindoo merchants, chiefly natives of Moultan, who by the maintenance of a brisk commerce, and extending a long chain of credit, have become valuable subjects to the government; but discouraged by the insolent and often oppressive treatment of the Persians, they are rarely induced to bring their women into this country. When the Hindoos cross the Attock, they usually put on the dress of a northern Asiatic; being seldom seen without a long cloth coat and a high cap. Some Jewish traders reside also at Herat, where they are accused of practising all that system of chicanery, to which their tribe is so notoriously addicted in the western world. Being habituated to the manners of upper Asia, and conversant in most of its languages, the Jews and Armenians mix with little personal inconveniency in Mahometan societies.

THE leading customs of the various nations of Asia are similar, or but weakly diversified. When they sit, the legs are crossed or bent under them; they perform topical ablutions before and after meals, at which no knife or spoon is used, unless the diet be wholly liquid; they invariably adopt the like modes of performing natural evacuations. And all the hair of the body is shaved, except that of the beard; yet this last usage is more peculiar to upper Asia, where likewise all degrees of people cover the head; affixing the idea of indecency to its being bare; and they never enter an apartment covered with a carpet, without pulling off their shoes.

ON taking leave of the Armenians, I could not help observing,

ing, perhaps unseasonably, that instead of contributing to my assistance, in a land where our sect already experienced many grievances, they had considerably increased them, by withholding even the inferior offices of humanity; but that I cordially forgave a treatment which was to be ascribed to the excess of caution constitutionally inherent to their tribe. The principal Armenian earnestly urged me to open myself to him, and disclose the mystery which appeared in my character. It was not in reason, he said, to believe that motives of curiosity, as I alleged, could have induced me to incur so much fatigue, danger, and expense, which were only to be compensated by the prospect of gain, or a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. But the Armenians, said he, are now the only visitors of the sacred tomb, and indeed the only pure Christians now existing. He was of opinion, in short, that my story was a counterfeit, and concluded by asserting that I was a jewel-merchant, or a spy. I endeavoured to explain, that among the natives of Europe, it was a common usage to visit foreign countries; where an observation of the manners and arts of various people, improved the understanding, and produced a more extensive knowledge of mankind; and that a frequent intercourse with nations of different customs and religious opinions, taught them to shake off domestic prejudice, and to behold all men with the eye of common affection. To this language, which he had probably never before heard, he listened with an air of vacant wonder; but,

but, as the doctrine did not square with his sentiments of the world, he ultimately treated it with contempt. Wishing me however a better journey, he said, than my plan promised.

ON the evening of the 22d of November, I left Herat, and halted that night at Alum Guffour Chushmah,* three quarters of a farsung. Here let me again crave your indulgence for the copious self narration already imposed on you, and for that which I fear is yet to come. But what can I do? northern Persia is at this day, equally void of events as of letters, and has but few monuments of grandeur. You must therefore extend a large portion of patience over these communications, and by permitting me to speak of myself, the favorite amusement of all travellers, you will make me a sufficient recompense for all the little chagrins, which I incurred, and some solitary hours which I passed in the course of my journey.

THE kafilah director, Aga Ali, and his family which consisted of his mother, wife and a servant, having consented that I should be received among them, in the character of an Arab, going on a pilgrimage to Muschid, I joined the party at an appointed place, whither every person resorted, except the females of our family; on whose heads, and indeed all parts of them, many an indecent reproach was thrown. There was no mortal ill, which these women did not deserve to feel; but,

* Chushmah in the Persian, signifies a natural fountain.

when women were concerned in any undertaking, what good could result, exclaimed all the enraged Mahometans. Night approaching, the kafilah moved and left Ali to escort the ladies, in which service I was also retained. On their arrival he began to utter some angry language; but it soon became manifest that we were members of a female government, which was conducted by the mother of Ali. She seemed in her manners, not unlike the Afghan lady, whom I heretofore endeavoured to celebrate, but had less fierceness and decision; the deficiency I presume, arose from the constitutional difference between the tempers of an Afghan and a Persian; for my new dame evinced the same thirst after supreme sway, but exercised it with more mildness. Ali remaining at the town gate to make some toll payments, dispatched the ladies and me under charge of some of his associates, who perceiving our progress to be very slow and the night far advanced, left us with little ceremony. When Ali arrived, he expressed much resentment at the scandalous desertion of his friends, and many thanks for my attention; though I could hear him murmur at the indecency of Mahometan women being entrusted to the charge of an infidel. But Ali's honor might have remained safe, in the most intemperate quarter of the world: and for my part, I was so grievously loaded by a heavy musquet, which he had given me to carry, that had his spouse been a Venus, I would not have looked at her. No apprehension now existed of a scolding nurse, a crying child, or a fanatic

fanatic disputant; or indeed of any thing which could actually offend; for my present associate was a bag of rice, from whose good neighbourhood, I anticipated much satisfaction.

ON the evening of the 24th, moved from the Chushmah, and arrived the next morning at Dhey Soorch, four fursongs. Some little cultivation was seen, but the general face of the country bore the same wild inhospitable aspect, as in the eastern quarter of Khorasan. The benefits attached to my new character, were now conspicuously testified. I was from my supposed sect, entitled Hadji, and much courted by all the passengers, especially when the given purpose of my journey was understood. No person in the description of a Christian, should attempt to make a passage through this part of Persia; should it through a train of favourable events be accomplished, he will be harrassed and defrauded, even on a principle of religion, and ever insulted with impunity. The attempt indeed I think impracticable, and liable to subject the adventurer to imminent danger.

ON the 26th, at the Pool, or bridge of Skebo, three and a half fursongs, in an uncultivated country. This bridge built of brick and mortar, stands over a small river whose name I could not learn, running to the southward or left, and is fordable at most seasons.

ON the 27th, at Corian, a large village, four and a half fursongs. In this neighbourhood, I saw some windmills, for grinding corn; they are constructed on the same principles as

those of Europe, but instead of canvas wings, broad leaved flags are substituted. The toll gatherer at Corian affects to observe a peculiar vigilance in the execution of his office, which he saw occasion to exercise on me.

PASSENGERS, proceeding to the westward, usually procure a passport at Herat; but being averse to a mode, which might have led to inconvenient explanations, I did not apply for this document. The officer, though glad of the omission, held out the utter impossibility of passing without the signature of government, and argued with much delicacy on the crime of disobedience. But feeling some of my money in his hand, he observed that my case admitted a favorable construction; that I was an Arab, and a pilgrim of the holy tomb of Muschid. He would therefore relax a little, he said, in so good a cause. To put money in thy purse, is as necessary in Khorasan as it was in Venice, with the difference that there, the more decorated the garb, the greater respect was shewn to the person, whereas in Asia, the security and the comforts of life, often depend on a wary concealment of wealth, and all its appendages.

THE complaints of Asiatic travellers against a camel driver, are not less frequent than those of marine passengers in our country, against the master of a ship, and oftentimes with the like want of just cause. Men under restraint and deprived of accustomed amusements, become unreasonable in their desires
and

and fretful from the natural disappointment of vain wishes. The cross incidents which their situation necessarily produces, and which a degree of skill might qualify, are often outrageously ascribed to their conductor. This preliminary though militating against myself, I thought but honest to the exhibition of certain charges against Ali the kafilah director. The first shews, that having bargained with this Mahometan, on the payment of a stipulated sum, for a conveyance to Turshih, he at the first halting place laid me under a contribution, on a pretence of the extraordinary weight of my baggage, though he well knew, that the equipment of a mendicant, could not have been more slender. This demand was no sooner adjusted, than he commenced another attack, not on my purse, though that was weak, but on my fame, which was vulnerable all over.

ALI seeing me generally addressed by the title of Hadji, and treated with a marked civility, was much mortified, and began to sap the importance I had obtained. He whispered to some of those with whom I associated, that I was no Hadgi, nor even one of the true faith. They expressed great surprise at this information, but blamed him for the disclosure, nor did they ever communicate the story to the other passengers, or abate in their former attention.

ON the 29th, at Charsoorch, seven fursungs, a station in an uninhabited country, and supplied with one well, whose water was barely sufficient for the supply of our party.

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ON the 30th, at Tursala, three and a half fursungs, a station in the desert, near a well of brackish water.

ON the 1st of December, at Kauff, seven fursungs, a populous, and in this country a large village, which maintains a moderate traffick with Herat, Muschid, and Turshish. Markets and public shops being only seen in the cities and principal towns of Persia and Afghanistan, travellers are obliged to apply for provisions to the housekeepers, who are often unable to provide the required quantity. Though Kauff is a village of note, bread in no part of it is publickly vended, and having occasion for a three days supply, I advanced the required price to a Persian, who, after keeping me in waiting till midnight absconded. Bread and the cheese of sheeps milk, when procurable, was my common fare; which, with a water beverage, gave me a vigor and strength equal to the daily fatigue I incurred. And when the inclemency of the weather is considered, and how broken his rest must be who is carried on the back of the roughest paced animal that moves, thrust also into a crib not half his size, and stunned by the loud clamours of the drivers, you must grant that no ordinary texture of constitution is required to accompany the kafilahs in northern Persia.

HAVING witnessed the robust activity of the people of this country and Afghanistan, I am induced to think, that the human body may sustain the most laborious services, without the aid of animal food. The Afghan whose sole aliment is bread, curdled

curdled milk and water, inhabiting a climate which often produces in one day, extreme heat and cold, shall undergo as much fatigue, and exert as much strength, as the porter of London, who copiously feeds on flesh meat and ale; nor, is he subject to the like acute and obstinate disorders. It is a well known fact, that the Arabs of the shore of the Red Sea, who live with little exception on dates and lemons, carry burthens of such an extraordinary weight, that its specific mention to an European ear, would seem romance.

On the 3d of December, at Ruée, four and a half furlongs, a populous village, where a fall of snow produced a change on the face of the land, to which I had been long a stranger. Halted on the 4th, on account of the inspection of some goods which had been damaged by the weather. Three Persians with myself occupied the lower part of a windmill, which our joint endeavours to defend from the cold, were wholly ineffectual, yet my companions seemed little affected by it. They were horsemen, and having no attendants, were obliged to clean their cattle, and go in search of forage, fuel and provisions; these offices they performed with alacrity, nor did they once shrink from the boisterous drifts of snow and a north wind that, I verily believe, must have swept every mountain-top in Tartary. My body, which a residence of many years in India, had greatly relaxed, and a recent sickness enfeebled, was open to every touch of those rude blasts, and I saw with mortification a north Briton,

ton, screening himself from a climate, which imparted vigor to an Asiatic. My associates had been horsemen in the service of Timur Shah, but disgusted at his ill payments, they had retired, and were returning to their families at Nishabor.

ON the 5th, at Say Day, five and a half fursungs, a small fortified village, whose adjacent lands extending in a valley, seemed to be well cultivated.

ON the 6th, at Ashkara, five fursungs, a small fortified village. A great quantity of snow fell on our arrival at this place, and the weather became so tempestuous, that the kafilah could not proceed. Our party went into the fort to seek shelter, and after earnest intreaties, were conducted into a small dark room, barely capable of defending us against the storm, which had now set in with violence. The inhabitants aware of our distress, furnished an abundant supply of fuel, which became as necessary to our existence as food; but when the cold was a little qualified, we experienced an urgent want of provisions; not an article of which was to be procured at Ashkara. This dilemma dismayed the stoutest of us, and became the more alarming from the apparently fixed state of the weather. Yet, such cordial pleasures are inherent in society, that though pent up in a dark hovel, which afforded but a flimsy shelter against the mounds of snow furiously hurled against it, our good humour with each other, and an ample supply of firing, produced cheerfulness and content.

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ONE of our associates who had received a more than ordinary education, and had a taste for poetical literature, amused us with reading Jamis's story of Joseph and Zuleicha,* which for its scenes of wondrous pathetic adventure, and the luxuriant genius of the poet, is happily adapted to soften the rigors of a winter's day. Nor was our companion deficient in accompanying the reading with that energetic emphasis and deep nasal tone, which in the east is thought highly ornamental to the recitation of poetry.

As our pleasures and our sorrows exist largely in the imagination, and as at this period, my ideas did not wander beyond the circle of my residence, I felt comforts in my present situation, equal perhaps to the enjoyments of the most refined societies. How often in the fervor of my heart, have I prayed for the fortitude which is said to have actuated the stoic school, that I might shackle, or at least qualify the passions that are continually precipitating us into dependance and embarrassments, and establish within myself a resource for conducting all the operations of life. But the wish was futile, nor would the gratification of it accord with the œconomy of human nature.

THE inhabitants of Ashkara were now busily employed in commemorating the death of Hufseyn, the second son of Ali, who was slain at Karibullah, in the vicinity of Bagdat, where a monu-

* The Patriarch of Ægypt. Zuleicha is the name given by the Arabians to the wife of Potiphar.

ment has been erected to his memory, and whither the Schiabs numerously resort, in the first ten days of the Mahometan month Mohurrun,* to offer up their prayers. Hufsin, the elder brother, was poisoned by some female machinations; but the celebration of this event, which is noticed at a different period of the year, does not produce that tumultuous lamentation, and often dangerous effects which accompany the memory of Hufseyn's fate.

A PILGRIMAGE to the tomb of Hufseyn, confers the title of Karribullahee; which classes next after the Hadji, and before a Muschidee, an appellation given to those who visit the shrine of Muschid. The pilgrims of Karibullah make grievous complaints of the insults and oppression of the Turks. Yet it would seem that persecution inflames and invigorates their sense of this religious duty, so that it is merely rated by the extent of difficulty and danger it occurs; for I have known a Schiah travel from the banks of the Ganges, to prostrate himself at Hufseyn's tomb, amidst the scoffs and rigor of the Turks. To prevent the Afghans from throwing a ridicule on their observance of the Mohurrun ceremony, which happened during our halt at Ashkara, the Persians shut the gate of the fort, and commemorated the day by beating their breasts, and chanting in a mournful tone, the praises of Hufseyn.

* The Mahometan months being Lunar, the fasts observed in Ramfar and Mohurrun are moveable.

IN India, though the proportion of the sect of Ali is small, and Hufseyn only known but by his name, this occasion never fails to excite extravagant tokens of grief and enthusiasm, and it often happened, that the masquerade mourners, impelled by a violent agitation of their minds and bodies, and heated also by intoxication, commit desperate outrages. But the fact is, that all the natives of India, Hindoos, and Mahometans, are wondrously attracted by public exhibitions, and those of the most glaring kind. Though any external commemoration of Hufseyn's death is repugnant to the doctrine of the Soonis, those of India cannot resist so alluring an offer of gratifying their love of shew and noise. Many of the Hindoos also, in compliance with this propensity, and the usage of their Mahometan masters, contribute largely to augment the Mohurrun processions. I have heard Mr. Schwartz, the Christian missionary on the coast of Coromandel, as pious a priest as ever preached the gospel, and as good a man as ever adorned society, complain that many of his Indian profelytes, disgusted at his church's want of glitter and bustle, take an early opportunity of going over to the Popish communion, where they are congenially gratified by the painted scenery, by relics, charms, and the blaze of fire-works. From Schiahs and Soonis, Protestants and Roman Catholics, I am forcibly brought to the business of the day. It is the roguery of a camel-driver, on whom, should you ever travel in Persia, never put your faith. Ali now gravely informed me, that he meant to proceed on the next day towards

Nisabor, but that he would provide a conveyance for me to Turkish on an ass. It was in vain to talk of engagements; the injustice of forfeiting them, or the sum I had advanced, and had not one of my associates pleaded my cause with a spirit that intimidated him, Ali would have laughed at my plea.

ON the 10th, the storm having abated, the kafilah moved before day-break, and arrived in the evening at Hoondeabad, six and a half fursongs, a small village, situate in a well cultivated plain, watered by many rivulets. Ali, with an ill grace, procured for me one side of a camel, the other being poised by a bag of rice, consigned to the market of Turkish; my companions, who had continued to treat me with much kindness, proceeded from this station to Nisabor, which lies about seventy miles to the north-west of Hoondeabad.

THE division of Khorasan, which has been annexed to the Afghan empire, seems to be wholly entrusted to the management of Persians, who though a conquered people, live in the enjoyment of every right, civil or religious, which could have been granted to them under their own princes. We met a party this day, returning from the army which Timur Shah had sent to besiege Mufchid. This city, on which depends a small tract of territory, is governed by Shah Rock, a grandson of Nadir Shah, and I believe, the only branch of that prince's family now in existence.

SHAH ROCK is the offspring of Mirza Kuli, the eldest son of Nadir Shah, by a daughter of the Sultan Hufseyn, who was driven
from

on the throne of Persia by Mahmoud the Afghan. After Nadir's death,* the empire fell to the possession of Ali, his nephew, who cut off all the descendants of Nadir, except Shah Rock then a youth, whom he intended to raise nominally to the throne, should the Persians shew any strenuous opposition to his government. But, being in a short time after his accession, encountered by his brother, who by liberal donations had collected a strong force, Ali was defeated and taken prisoner in the field. Ibrahim, though at the head of a numerous army, and possessing the southern provinces of the empire, saw the impracticability of attaining the dominion of Persia, whilst Shah Rock, who was much beloved in Khorasan, held the city of Muschid, where a large portion of the treasures of Nadir were deposited.

THAT he might the better succeed in his design of seizing the person of Shah Rock, his only rival, he declared this prince, by a lineal descent from Nadir and the race of Sofi, to be the rightful heir of the kingdom, and by public deputation invited him to Isfahan, that he might there be invested with the diadem of his ancestors. The adherents of Shah Rock, averse from entrusting him to so powerful and suspicious a charge, made an advantageous use of Ibrahim's professions, by installing with the necessary ceremonials, the young prince at Muschid. Ibrahim,

* Nadir Shah was assassinated, at the age of sixty years, near Muschid, in the month of June, 1747.

baffled

baffled in the design of drawing Shah Rock to Ispahan, caused himself to be proclaimed king, and proceeded to reduce the chiefs of Khorasan. But squandering his treasures by an indiscriminate profusion, and having disgusted his troops by an injudicious choice of officers, he was betrayed by them, and together with Ali, then his prisoner, delivered to the ministers of Shah Rock, who put the brothers to death.

About this period appeared, it is said, a descendant of the ancient Sofi family, who had escaped the massacre of the times, and improving to his purposes the distraction of the kingdom and the minority of a young prince, he suborned, by a largess, and extensive promises, a party in the court of Muschid, and having procured at a secret hour admittance into the palace of Muschid, he seized the person of Shah Rock and deprived him of sight. The act was soon punished by the death of the perpetrator, but Shah Rock, cut off by this calamity from the hope of empire, was contented to remain at Muschid, in the possession of a very limited revenue.

He has two sons, Nadir Mirza, and Wulli Neamut, who are waging against each other an inveterate predatory war. Wulli Neamut being driven from the city, has collected a body of cavalry, which in Khorasan are ever ready to rove in quest of plunder, and are at this time levying a general contribution on every village, caravan, and traveller, within his power or reach; not sparing even the pilgrims. After an ineffectual effort to
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enter the city, he solicited the assistance of Timur Shah, who sent a small army to join him and besiege Muschid. But their knowledge of artillery is so limited, that the Afghans after the campaign of a year, have only been enabled to streighten the supplies of the besieged.

When the extensive conquests of the Afghans in Persia are considered, the spacious empire which they have so recently founded, and their general reputation for military prowess, I felt a sensible disappointment at seeing their armies, composed of a tumultuous body, without order or common discipline. It is seen, however, that they were good soldiers under Ahmed Shah, who himself, a prince of conspicuous military talent and a discerning patron of merit, was empowered to give his troops that force which they constitutionally possess. Yet even under this famed leader, the Afghans, impetuous, and haughty from the form of their government, were never an obedient soldiery; and the severe encounters which Ahmed Shah experienced from the Sicques, when he ultimately evacuated the Punjab, are attributed to the desertion of his troops, who already enriched by the plunder of India, retired in large bodies to their own country.

THOUGH far short of the opinion I had formed of it, the Afghan army is much superior to that of Persia at the present day, who long deprived of a monarch, and subjected either to a foreign yoke or the precarious authority of petty chieftains, have lost with their patriotism the spirit of enterprize. It appears that the Persians

fians have been ever ill acquainted with the use of fire arms, and that their grand successes were obtained by the formidable onset of their cavalry. Little other proof indeed is required of their want of skill, than a review of Nadir's long siege of Bagdad, which, though a fortification of mean tenability, baffled all his efforts. The matchlock-piece is the common weapon of a Persian foot soldier, except in the province of Auderbeijan, and in some parts of Shirvan and Dhaghistan, where the use of the spring lock musquet has been adopted from the Turks; but the ridicule which has been thrown on this practice by the body of the people, will probably long prevent its general introduction. The severity of the winter season, has now obliged the Afghan army to retire into quarters, and afforded a temporary relief to the inhabitants of Muschid, who began to feel a want of provisions.

THE young chief of this city, in defiance of the representations of his clergy, has coined into current specie such of those ornaments with which the ostentatious zeal of the Schiahs had for two centuries been decorating the tomb of Mooza Beza, as had been preserved from former depredations. Even Nadir, the avowed foe of priesthood, made his offering at the shrine of Muschid. But his descendant fearing that the whole fabric would fall into the unhallowed hands of his enemies, has wisely sacrificed a part, to prevent a total destruction. Yet his efforts will probably be fruitless; for if the Afghans return to the siege, they will derive a considerable aid from the low state of the Muschid treasury, which I
am

am informed is nearly consumed. While the priests inveigh with sufficient acrimony against the sacrilegious seizure of Nadir Mirza, there is no limit to their invectives against his brother, on whom they deprecate the severest divine vengeance, for calling in the inveterate ~~foes~~ of their religion, to the destruction of the only sacred city left in the possession of the sect of Ali.

ON the 11th, at Fidgeroot, a small fort, three and a half fursungs, situate in a cultivated and generally a plain country, in whose vicinity are seen many fortified villages.

ON the 12th, at Dochabad, four and a half fursungs, a populous open village, protected by an adjoining fort, and distinguished by a manufacture of raw silk. The districts of Dochabad form the western boundary of the dominion of Timur Shah, which in a direction from Kashmire to this place,* occupy by a gross computation, a space of ——— British miles. Were this spacious extent of territory, governed by as vigorous and enterprizing a prince, as it is peopled by a brave and hardy race of men, the entire conquest of Persia would not be of difficult attainment. But Timur Shah inherits no portion of his father's genius, and his power is seldom seen or felt, except some object of wealth, and of safe accomplishment be held out to his avarice. The existence of the emperor is

* It is to be noted, that some petty chiefships lying between Kashmire and the Indus, are held by independant Afghans.

then felt, and for the day, dreaded. Here I am checked by a fear that these opinions may be thought presumptuous and dogmatical, and that from slender opportunities of acquiring information, I have decided with an unwarrantable preremptoriness on the character of a prince, in whose country I have been but a mere sojourner. I have only to urge, that the language which I have held, is prevalent in the country, and its truth strongly marked in all the operations of government, which come before the public eye.

ON the 13th, at Koot, six fursungs, a village dependent on the chief of Turshish. From the vicinity of Dochabad, a waste extends to this place, on which is neither an inhabitant, or the least token of vegetation; and it should seem that nature had interposed this barren sand to preclude the assaults of war, and even discourage a disposition to social intercourse. To the north, extends a lofty chain of mountains covered with snow,* and the other quarters shew a tract of sand, thinly marked with craggy hills.

THE proprietor of the camel on which I rode, had carried me to Koot, his place of residence, fearing to carry his wares, principally composed of rice, to the town of Turshish, lest the chief should take it at an arbitrary price. He told me, that

* A road leads over these mountains to Muschid, which is said to be one hundred miles north-west from Turshish, and about thirty miles to the northward of Nishabor.

his

his cattle were not destined for that place, whither I might pursue my way in the best manner I liked, except on his camel. The fort of Turshish being at no greater distance than two miles, I would have proceeded without hesitation, could I have carried my baggage, which though of little value, was too heavy a load for me. After much intreaty, it was transported at my charge, on the back of an afs,* to the karavanserai at Turshish; there I found every apartment occupied, but the application of a small piece of money to the gate-keeper, who regulates the distribution of quarters, introduced me to a lodging, occupied by only one person. The stranger accosted me with evident tokens of joy, observing, that the solitary life he had passed at Turshish, was very tiresome to him, and that he expected a cordial relief from my company. This reception was happily adapted to my purpose, and promised my Mahometan character a fair introduction. It was agreed that a joint board should be kept, that my associate, yet weak from a late sickness, should prepare the victuals, and that I should furnish the water, and a laborious duty it was, there being no good water at a nearer distance than a mile.

HERE I must inform you, that this was by no means a degrading duty, and is performed by travellers of a rank much

* The Persian asses are of a strong make, and much used by dealers in small and ordinary wares. I have seen the conveyance of large parties, consisting of those animals, which appear to be more active and endure more fatigue than those of England.

superior to that I held, and also that few travellers in this country of whatever condition exhibit any appearance of wealth, fearing the oppressions of government, and the licentious exactions of the toll gatherers. Even men of opulence do not carry a servant.

PREVIOUSLY to the commencement of a journey, societies are formed at the place of rendezvous, where the different offices are allotted to each; the most robust generally provide the water; some are employed in the kitchen, while others go in quest of provisions and provender for the cattle. Should no prior opportunity have offered to fix such a scheme, it is adjusted on the first halting day, and preserved on a cordial footing throughout the journey. It is not to be inferred that certain attentions are not also shewn to the men of rank, who attach themselves to these parties. When known, and they are soon distinguished, they become by common consent exempt from the more laborious occupations, and all aged persons are invariably treated with a respectful indulgence. My present companion, whose name I never knew or asked, was overcast with a fixed melancholy reserve; nor, could I extract from him other information, than that he had last come from Asterabad. But he studiously avoided giving me any intelligence of the affairs of that province, especially of the Russian trade there which I much desired to know, and of which he must have been informed; and though he seemed to like my company or perhaps my assistance, he soon became to me an unplea-

unpleasant colleague. In a few days, his departure to Herat left me sole tenant of a dark solitary lodging, with the advantage, and with the privilege of being unreservedly admitted into the society of the karavanfara, as a pure Mahometan.

IN the course of vacancies, I got possession of a more commodious apartment, in the corner of which I found at first entrance, a decent looking old man smoking his pipe. On enquiry it appeared, that he was then wholly at large; but that his usual subsistence arose from vending certain spells, which were powerfully efficacious in conferring every species of worldly happiness, and consequently in the preclusion of all evil. Yet he was willing to shut up his book, he said, should any other prospect of maintenance he held out. This being the person I was in search of, I made him a cordial tender of my assistance, and invited him to a participation of my fare. The offer came to him, poor man, at a convenient season. It was now the depth of winter, and he honestly confessed to me, that his charms had so bad a run at Turshish, that even a scanty meal was earned with difficulty.

THE mollah, which was the title he had derived from his professional skill, with a natural good temper, had acquired an accommodating disposition; he was all things to all men; and he found a full exercise of those qualities during our association. The little regularity I observed in our domestic system, especially in the hours of eating, was subject of frequent complaint

plaint to the mollah, who applied to the business of the kitchen, in which he had attained an eminent proficiency, with an active attention; nor was Sancho more attached to its produce; and he also reprehended my disregard to those dishes which he most favored. His censure generally conveyed an ejaculation of surprise, at the neglect of a concern the most important to man, or at my bad taste, which he alledged, must have been vitiated in the course of my journeying through barbarous countries.

HAVING enjoyed during my acquaintance with this mollah so many conveniencies, and so pleasing a quiet of mind, I often review the scene with sensible emotions of pleasure. For my strength, as well as my spirits, had been much exhausted by the fatigues of the road, and various molestations necessarily incident to a traveller of my description. The cold being intense and the country covered with snow, it became expedient in the first instance, to lay in a stock of fuel, which is a dear commodity at Turkish, that we might at least communicate an external heat to our bodies; for our creed precluded any interior cordial, nor durst we even mention its name. But we were moderately recreated by a wholesome diet, large fires, a clean hearth, with plenty of Persian tobacco, which is of a most excellent kind.* When I have contemplated the progress of

* That produced at Tubbus, a town about one hundred miles to the south-west of Turkish, is esteemed the best in Persia.

my

my associate in his culinary occupation, in mixing with care and earnestness the ingredients of a hodge-podge, stirring it vigorously with a large wooden spoon, blowing and arranging the fire, till his eyes were red, I have been prompted to compare him to a Prussian serjeant, immersed in the fury and enthusiasm of drilling a squad of recruits, and cudgelling into their bodies all the ability of their brains. Nor could one of our minute virtuosos have been more inflated with pride at the discovery of a new species of snail, than the mollah, in demonstrating the qualities of some favorite dish.

THE excellent services of my companion now left me at liberty to walk about the town, collect information, and frequent the public baths. In the evening we were always at home, when the Mollah at the conclusion of our meal, either read a story of Yussuf and Zuleicha which he did but lamely, or opening his book of spells, he would expound the virtues of his nostrums, which embraced so wide a compass, that few diseases of the mind or body could resist their force. They extended from recalling to the paths of virtue, the steps of a frail wife, and silencing the tongue of a scolding one, to curing chilbains, and destroying worms. His practice he told me, had been more extensive than profitable, being chiefly employed by the lower classes of people; the rich rarely sought his aid. He was meditating, he said, which I had now obviated, a journey to Muschid, where he would have been enabled to pass the winter, a season

season always of anxious care to him; as for the summer, he never bestowed a thought on it.

THE duty of religion sat rather loosely on the mollah, for out of the five daily prayers,* he usually struck off four, and on many days the omission was total. But observing that I was yet more relaxed, he would gravely censure my negligence; not that I was degraded in his opinion, but it was necessary, he said, to maintain a decorum of manners, that the people of the karavanfara might not make unfavourable remarks. The spirit and tendency of the mollah's observation, when impartially considered, discloses the grand tenure by which the religion of Mahomet is at this day held. It is on the daily recital of five prayers,† washing as often, and a restriction from a certain food, that the Mahometan builds his hope of Paradise. And the reputation of such a person, in Persia, is equal to that of our men of virtue, honor, and humanity. Even to that of our man of fashion.

* The first, a short one, is said before the break of day, the second on the earliest appearance of light, a period usually denominated the Wokt Nemaz, or time of prayer, the third about two hours before sun-set, the fourth at the close of the evening, this is also termed the Wokt Nemaz, and the fifth in the course of the night. The second and fourth prayers are most regularly observed.

† I have seen grave long bearded Mahometans, retire a few steps from the exhibition of a lascivious dance, and in the same apartment kneel to their prayers, which hastily muttering, they returned to the amusement.

ON

ON the other side, he that shall neglect these ceremonies, though he may execute to an ample extent, the duties of a good citizen, is branded with the general mark of contumely; and should his condition of life not be sufficiently eminent to command respect, he is cut off from many of the benefits of society. That I may point out to you more specifically the opinion of a Mahometan on the essential efficacy of forms, I am induced to relate an observation of the mollah. In speaking of an Afghan, who had himself access to the karavanfera by an agreeable and friendly disposition, he said, that he willingly subscribed to the compass of his moral merits, but was sorry to see them vitiated by offering up his prayers with folded hands. Does it not astonish you, that the mind of a creature so exquisitely formed by the great lord of nature, should have become so strongly fettered by the shackles of prejudice, should have formed ideas so derogatory of his infinite benevolence, as to be fearful of approaching his altar but in certain positions and flexions of the body.

TRAVELLING once with some Persians on a sultry day, and over an ill watered country, the party unexpectedly approached a small stream, where hastily dismounting, I drank a cup of water with avidity, one of the Persians who stood near me, cried out in an earnest tone, while I was finishing the draught, to reserve a little in the bottom of the vessel, and throw it on the ground with an

execration on the memory of Yezid.* On seeing that not a drop remained, he viewed me with evident marks of detestation, and pronounced me a *kaufir*. But Persia has long lost her men of genius and philanthropy. The day of Ferdousi, Sadi, and Hafiz, is set in barbarous darkness; and little else is now written or listened to, except the legends of priests, or the chimerical exploits of the twelve Imaums, which nearly quadrate in style and matter with our renowned nursery histories of Tom Thumb, or Jack the Giant-killer; though with a more pernicious effect; for the Persian writings strongly tend to eternise amongst them a rancorous hatred to all those of a different creed.

It is recorded that the coteremporaries of Hafiz, were so much offended at his bold disquisitions on the religion of the Koran, and witty strictures on the loose conduct of the clergy, that at his death, they hesitated to perform the usual obsequies. Yet the later Persians have not only acquitted Hafiz of any charge of irreligion, though almost every page of the poet refutes the position, but they assert, that under the cloak of his sportive pleasurable exhortations, he describes the excellency of their faith, and the future happiness of pious Mahometans.

WHILE the mollah and I were enjoying the comforts of a commodious apartment, and savoury messes, made in rotation

* The chief who slew Hussein the son of Ali.

of

of beef, mutton, and camels flesh, on a sudden, every room of the karavanfara was tumultuously filled by a large body of pilgrims * from the shrine of Muschid. What an exuberance of zeal must have animated these devotees ! which neither so distant and perilous a journey could deter, or the inclement season of the year cool. The present winter was accounted more rigorous than had been for some years remembered, particularly in the quarter of Muschid and Nishabor, where two of these pilgrims had perished in the snow, and others had lost their limbs by the severity of the frost.

IN that band, which rushed into our apartment, was a person who seemed to take the avowed lead ; he was better equipped than his associates, and wore on his head the insignia of a hadji ;† a pilgrim, who supplied the place of a servant, began to reconnoitre the room, and as soon as he had noticed its situation, he dislodged without ceremony, and with much facility from one of its corners, the very portable chattels of our poor mollah ; and in the voice of authority, declared the place assigned to the use of the hadji, whom he represented to be of superior rank and importance.

THE hadji took his seat with a solemn air, and looking haughtily around, he threw his eye on me, and immediately asked, or rather demanded my name and business. The question was con-

* They were chiefly inhabitants of Tabriz, the ancient Taurus, I believe, a town in the province of Azerbeijan.

† In Persia it is a strip of cloth commonly green, rolled on the edge of the cap.

veyed in a manner which fully evinced the power of the interrogator; indeed I quickly saw, from the party's deference to him, the necessity of observing a respectful conduct to this superb Mahometan. I told him that I was an Arab, travelling to Muschid; but judge of my confusion, when the hadji began to speak in my supposed language. Endeavouring to suppress my embarrassment at so complete a conviction of falsity, I observed, that I had assumed the name of an Arab, for the purpose of travelling with more safety; but that I was a native of Kashmire, proceeding on a mercantile concern to Mazanderan. Such stories, which in the east may be described by the smoother term, simulation, are in common use among Asiatic travellers; and unless other testimony corroborates their relations, little credit is given, nor is much expected. It is sufficient that their true story remains concealed.

THIS emendation of my account, produced no apparent surprise, nor any further interrogation; and from the mode of the hadji's behaviour, it was evident that I had not suffered in his opinion. The last year of my life had been occupied in an invaried scene of disguise, with a language wholly fabricated to preserve it; so that, God forgive me, I never wanted a ready tale for current use. I have now only to hope, that when it may be no longer expedient to support the part hitherto so successfully maintained, I shall be enabled to throw off the cloak with all its garniture for ever. The hadji was a resident of Balfrosh, the principal town

town of Mazanderan, where he maintained a considerable traffic; he had joined the Tabrez pilgrims at Muschid, and was now on the way back to his own province. The occasion of accompanying this party was not to be foregone; as few roads are of more dangerous passage, than that from Turshish to the Caspian sea, and consequently not much frequented. The hadji, to whom I applied for a passage to Balfrosh, affected to lay various obstacles in my way, and seeing my anxiety to proceed, he made his bargain conformably, that is, he stipulated for a double amount of the usual hire.

THE territory of Turshish, which takes in about ——— miles from east to west, and nearly half that space in latitudinal direction, is held by Abedullah, an independant Persian chief; he seems to be forty years of age, has a respectable appearance, and assumes that air of gravity which strongly pervades the manners of the higher classes of Mahometans. His administration is well liked by the people, who seem to act and speak very much at their ease. Passengers are never interrogated, nor is a passport required.

ADJOINING to old Turshish, called also Sultanabad, which is of small compass, and surrounded with a wall, Abedulla has built a new town, in an angle of which stands the karavanfara, the only one I have seen in Persia, which is not interiorly supplied with water. The chief and his officers reside in the new quarter, where is also held the market, which the inhabitants say, has not been

so

so well supplied, since the Afghan troops have laid waste the districts of Muschid, and thereby impeded the traffic of this quarter of Khorasan.

THE trade of Turshish, arises chiefly from the import of indigo and other dyes from the westward, woollen cloths, and rice, which is scantily produced in this vicinity, from Herat. And the chief article of export seems to be iron, wrought in thick plates. The small quantity of European cloths required at Turshish, is brought from Mazanderan, by the way of Shahroot, or from Ghilan, by the way of the great road of Yezd. About one hundred Hindoo families from Moultan and Jessilmere; are established in this town, which is the extreme limit of their emigration on this side of Persia; they occupy a quarter in which no Mahometan is permitted to reside, and where they conducted business without molestation or insult: and I was not a little surprized to see those of the Bramin sect, distinguished by the appellation of Peerzadah, a title which the Mahometans usually bestow on the descendants of their prophet. Small companies of Hindoos are also settled at Muschid, Yezd, Kachan, Casbin, and some parts of the Caspian shore; and more extensive societies in the different towns of the Persian Gulf, where they maintain a navigable commerce with the western coast of India.

THE departure of our kafilah now drawing near, the hadji purchased a horse for my conveyance, with the money which I had advanced; but not thinking my weight and baggage a sufficient burthen

burthen for the animal, by no means a robust one, he added two heavy parcels of dying stuffs, on which I was to be seated. This was the most rapacious Mahometan I had yet known; not satisfied with the first extortion, he urged me without intermission, for a loan of money, even the most trifling sum; in other words, he wanted to cheat me. There are, I believe, few such men amongst us as Hadji Mahomet. He had the reputation of being an opulent merchant, and he was connected with persons of the first rank in his country; his deportment was grave and dignified; his manners in common intercourse were so forcibly insinuating, that he never failed to please, even those who knew and had experienced his ill qualities; he had, on the ostensible score of devotion, made pilgrimages in Arabia, Turkey, and Persia; he prayed with undeviating regularity five times in the day, besides a long roll of supererogatory orisons. Yet this man of property and rank, of polite manners, and professed sanctity, having in vain aimed at a larger sum, importuned me in abject language to lend or give him half a crown. But my feelings having become callous, from a long association, I suppose, with those who had none, I was enabled to withstand, with intrepid coolness, the intreaties of the hadji, who seemed to take the refusal nothing amiss; indeed I imagine, he accounted me a person of discretion, and conversant in the business of the world.

THAT I might the better guard against a suspicion of the character I represented, especially in the mind of the hadji, who to
his

his other acquirements united insatiable inquisitiveness, I told him that I was a Sooni, imagining that the low estimation in which this sect is held in Persia, would prevent further notice. The hadji did not approve of this character, which was rarely seen, and much abhorred in this part of the country; nor would it be safe for a Sooni, he said, to travel in the society of Schiah pilgrims, who elevated by their late purification at Muschid, would assume a merit from insulting and ill treating me.

By the council of Hadji Mahomed I became a Schiah, and was received among the pilgrims without a scruple. It was, believe me, with no little concern, that I parted from the mollah, who had been to me as useful as well as a pleasant companion; and in the unreserved intercourse which had for some days subsisted between us, I experienced a pleasure, the more sensible, as my situation before had been solitary and irksome. In his dealings, I found him punctually honest, for conceiving an attachment to this harmless conjuror, I used to make enquiries at the places where he made his purchases for me, but never discovered a false charge.

ON the morning of the 28th of December, left Turshish, and about noon arrived at the village of Killeelabad, two and a half fursungs. Our party consisting of about six or seven persons, the Tubrez having not yet joined, halted at a small karavansera, where being plentifully supplied with fuel by one of the villagers, to whom

whom our hadji was known, we passed a cold snowy night very comfortably.

ON the 29th, at Hadjiabad, a small fort, three fursungs. When the chief of this place was informed that Hadji Mahomed was our leader, for though of a distant province, he was well known in Khorasan, we were invited to the fort, and hospitably entertained.

THIS day my horse gave many tokens of inability to support the heavy burthen that had been laid upon him. He eat little, sweated much, and often stumbled. In one of his inclinations, I was thrown from my elevated seat with a violent shock, and received a violent contusion on the hand. Instead of expressing any concern at the disaster, the hadji sharply reprehended my want of skill, and predicted ill success to my undertakings.

AT Hadjiabad the pomegranates are of a delicious flavor, a property indeed of this fruit in most parts of Persia. It has a thin soft skin, and contains a large quantity of juice, than which nothing in hot weather, or after fatigue can be more grateful. There is a species of the pomegranate, in Persia and also in Afghanistan, whose granules are without seed, called the Redana;* it is of a superior kind, and generally scarce.

ON the 30th, at Nowblehuckum, three fursungs, a large and populous village, where our party was joined by the Tabrez pil-

* This word in the Persic, signifies without seed.

grims. From Turshish to this place, the general direction of the road, lay about west; the country is open and well cultivated, but like the eastern division of Khorasan, scantily supplied with wood and running water. At this place, my endeavour to procure a stock of wheat bread, to support me during a three or four days journey over a desert, which lay in the road, was wholly fruitless. The number of applicants for a like provision was so great, and their arguments from the late meritorious service they had performed, was so much more efficacious than mine, that I was obliged to rest satisfied with a few barley cakes.

BEING thrown by a sort of chance, for the two last days, into the company of a Ghilan seid, who had been making the pilgrimage of Muschid, we agreed after a short preliminary, to place in a common stock our provisions and good offices. Man you know of all created beings, is the least fitted, and the least desirous to live alone. It is true, that if not sunk by vice, or fascinated by dissipation, he will occasionally fly from the fatigues of business, the rapid hurry of crowds, and seeking the shade of retirement, solace and exercise his intellectual faculties. But when he has breathed out his day of contemplation, he is often seen returning from the world he fled from, with a fond solicitude. It is not for me to expatiate on the pleasures and uses of society, the subject has for ages fallen under the most extensive and erudite discussion; nor can the pen of a journalist give it additional lustre. I will now only observe, that after a tedious fatiguing journey, it was with a
high

high relish, I sat down to a homely meal with this seid, whose remarks and singular opinions on the subject of religion, never failed to give amusement and information.

On the 31st, at Durroona, seven fursungs, a small village, situate near the western boundary of the territory of Abedullah, the road led in a western direction through a barren country. In crossing a steep rivulet, during this day's journey, my horse precipitated me with the hadji's bags of dye into the middle of it, where we were discovered lying by this now enraged Mahometan. He smote his beard until his anger found utterance, when he poured on me a torrent of abuse, and charging his ill fortune to my scandalous omission of the stated prayers of a Mussulman, he declared that I should indemnify the loss of his paint to the last farthing.

On the 1st January, 1784, having travelled eight fursungs, through a desert, which was interspersed with low hills and a thin scattering wood, we halted on an eminence, where the snow which covered it, supplied our water. My horse became so much enfeebled, that he was unable to carry me with the other part of his load; and I should have been left on the ground, had not some of the passengers who were apprized of the extraordinary sum which I had paid for hire, warmly expostulated with the hadji on the injustice of his conduct; somewhat abashed at the remonstrance, and fearful perhaps of a more general attack on the many weak sides of his character, the hadji procured a horse, from a person who was proceeding two stages on our road,

and who for a small gain, consented to dismount and incur an excessive fatigue.

THE domestic associate of Hadji Mahomed, having seen his patron treat me with neglect, and often with rudeness, thought that he might with impunity indulge a like spirit; but seeing no reason to shew him the respect which I observed to the hadji, I was provoked this evening to give him a smart chastisement, and in the English manner; a species of attack as novel to him as it was efficacious, and which surprized the pilgrims, who bestowed on me a general applause. In this occurrence, you will perceive the essential advantages of my Mahometan character: for in my real one no affront, however insolent, or opprobrious could have warranted any active resentment; the only resource would have been a silent patience; it is indeed often necessary to assuage the offender's wrath, to avert a further outrage. The penalty that would probably be inflicted on a Christian, hardy enough to lift his hand in this part of Persia, against a Mahometan, would be a heavy fine or severe corporal punishment.

THE Armenians who visit most of the quarters of western Asia, are seldom seen on this road, dreading equally the inimical disposition and inveterate prejudices of the inhabitants to all those of a different faith, and the incursions of the Turkoman Tartars.

ON the 2d, at Towrone, five fursungs, a small fortified village, situate in the districts of Ismael Khan, an independant chief, who also claims the desert, extending from Deronne to this place; nor is it

it probable that the property will ever be disputed. Many travellers, it is said, have perished in this track, from the intense heats and a scarcity of water, which in the course of the first stage, is procured but in one spot, by digging small wells.

We learned that a party of fifty Turcoman horse, had yesterday passed under the walls of Towrone, in the way to their own country. These fierce free-booters who wage a common war on the Persians, enslave as well as plunder those who fall into their hands. To prevent an escape, the captives are sent into the interior parts of the country, where they are employed in tending the numerous droves of cattle and horses, with which Tartary abounds. They are also occasionally sold to the Kalmucks, the most rude and savage of all the Tartar race.* A slavery with these is spoken of with horror,

* One of the names of a native of Tartary, in the language of his country, is Tatter and Tattaur. Having often indulged a curiosity in searching for the etymology of Asiatic names, which though not tending to the developement of any important facts, may reflect subordinate lights, I have been induced to insert some of them in this place.

The term, Ferung or Feringhee, a name commonly applied at this day among most of the nations of Asia, except the Chinese, seems to be derived from Frank, an appellation by which the Crusade Christians were indiscriminately described by the inhabitants of Asia Minor.

Saracen one of the names formerly given to the people of Arabia, may on a ground fair enough be deduced from Sahara, which in the Arabic, signifies a desert, and may with equal propriety be given to the inhabitant of a barren region, as the term Highlander, among us, to the resident of a mountainous country; and I am the more induced to adopt the probable truth of this derivation, as it was pointed out to me by the most accurate scholar (the present Archbishop of York) of our Country.

The

horror, and accounted worse than death. The Turcomans of this day, are a tribe of no important note; and their military operations are directed chiefly to the attack of karavans and defenceless villages. They are no longer that great and powerful people which produced a Zinjis and a Timur; the conquerors of Asia, whose posterity were seen in this country, seated on the most splendid throne of the world. It is now received as a general position of history, that those immense bodies of soldiers which spread over and ultimately subdued the dominion of Rome, under the name of Goths and Vandals, were the Tartars of Bochara, Kheiva and the shores of the Caspian. The present chief of the Turcoman tribe, resides at Bochara, where he keeps a moderate court, and exercises a very limited power. The Tartars of the more eastern regions, the modern conquerors of China, who may be ranged under the common designation of Kalmucks and Monguls, are divided into various roving herds, and would seem to be no longer a cause of dread to the southern nations of Asia.

PREPARING this morning to proceed, I could neither find the horse I had ridden yesterday, nor its master, who it appeared had proceeded alone an hour before the departure of the party. The

The Mahometan subjects of the Ottoman empire, are known in Europe by the common name of Turks, which immediately accords with one of the grand designations used by the Tartars, who wrested that region from the Arabian khaliphate. And a cause of a similar nature has probably induced many of the Hindoo traders, to apply the same denomination to the Mahometans of India.

road

road being covered with a deep snow, it was with great fatigue and exertions I could overtake the deserter, who frankly said, that he was apprehensive of not being paid by the hadji, but, that if I would answer for the payment of the hire, I might immediately mount his steed. The adjustment being speedily made, I rode on to Towrone; from whence I sent back this same person, on whom money had irresistible force, to bring the hadji's tired horse, which I learned from some of the passengers, was scarcely able to crawl. Fearful of being altogether abandoned by Hadji Mahomet, I found it necessary to speak to him in unreserved language, which was strongly supported by a Persian merchant, whose notice I had acquired, and after much opposition, became successful.

ON the 3d, the kafilah halted in a desert, eight furlongs, at a small stream, the only water seen in the course of this day's journey; the Ghilan seid and I had filled our bottle for mutual use, and the bread, cheese, and onions, which supplied our evening meal, giving me a violent thirst, I made frequent applications to our water flock. The seid, seeing that I had taken more than a just portion, required that the residue should be reserved for his ceremonial ablutions.

WHILE the seid retired to pray, I went in search of fuel, and returning first to our quarter, I hastily drank off the remaining water, and again betook myself to wood-cutting, that I might not be discovered near the empty vessel by my associate, who had naturally an irascible temper. When I supposed he
had

had returned from his prayer, I brought in a large load of wood, which I threw on the ground with an air of great fatigue, and of having done a meritorious service. "Aye," says he, "while I like a true believer have been performing my duty to God, and you toiling to procure us firing for this cold night, some hardened kaufir, who I wish may never drink again in this world, has plundered the pittance of water which was set apart for my ablutions." He made strict search among our neighbours for the perpetrator of this robbery, as he termed it but receiving no satisfactory information, he deliberately delivered him or them to the charge of every devil in the infernal catalogue, and went grumbling to sleep.

ON the 4th, at Khanahoody, eight fursungs, a fortified and populous village, the residence of Ismael Khan, who possesses a small independant territory in this quarter. The road from Towrone, led in a western direction, through a desert track, interspersed with low and bare hills.

ABOUT three miles to the eastward of Khanahoody, a chain of mountains, of the medium altitude, extends in a north and south direction, whose western face is considerably higher than that to the eastward. This branch of hills, which seem to have a long scope, has effected a grand change in the course of the running waters. The streams on the western side, have a south-west current, and flow, I imagine, into the Caspian sea, or into the head of the gulf of Persia, while those on the eastern

eastern side, are probably carried to the more southern shores of the Gulf.

FROM the summit of the Khanahoody hills, is seen, to the west and north-west, a wide extended plain, thickly covered with villages and arable lands; nor does a rising ground in this direction interrupt the utmost scope of the eye. Here I must note, that this quarter of Persia has now assumed its most unfavorable appearance; it being the depth of winter, when little vegetation is seen on the ground, and not a leaf on the trees: This day died an old man of our party, who had been long ailing; and what was rather singular, his death happened while he was on horseback.

ON the 5th, at Bearjumund, three fursungs, a populous village in the districts of Ismael Khan. Halted on the 6th, on account of the sickness of our kafilah director. Two of the pilgrims who were carpenters, made a litter for him, which was furnished with poles like a sedan, and carried by two mules, one of which was yoked before and the other behind the seat.

ON the 7th, at Nasirabad, nine fursungs, a small fortress in ruins, situate on an eminence. We passed at about midway through two uninhabited villages near each other, Kow and Kauff, noted places of rendezvous of the Turkoman banditti, and standing on one of the grand roads from Persia into Tartary. On approaching Nasirabad, I observed numerous bones of a large size strewed on the ground, and which I learned were

the remains of some of the elephants of Nadir Shah, who had ordered them to be sent into the southern provinces, where the warmth of climate is better adapted to the health of those animals : but many of them died on the journey.

PERSIA, since its empire has been rent into pieces, has suffered severe devastations, and has been grievously depopulated. The various petty chiefs, who hold themselves but the rulers of a day, are often incited to oppress the inhabitants, and impose heavy taxes on the merchant ; yet these exactions might receive some alleviation, did the governors exert any active efforts in defending their districts from the depredations of the Tartars, who, even in parties of a hundred, are scouring the country from Muschid to the Caspian sea ; and in the course of this last year, a body of them, less than a thousand, had penetrated to the environs of Ispahan. Such acts of unrestrained violence, marked with every species of barbarity, will point out some of the evils, which have this day overwhelmed Persia, which must remain sunk in this inglorious obscurity, until some future hero shall destroy the present pigmy race, and raising the structure of a new empire, shall collect its strength, and impart to it vigorous action.

ALL the towns, villages, and even the smallest hamlets in the northern division of Persia, though but at the distance of half a mile from each other, are surrounded with walls, which seem to have been erected more as a shelter against domestic robbery and private feuds, than the assault of an enemy. In considering

considering the perpetual alarms, solicitude and machinations, which must necessarily agitate the inhabitants of this region, we are at a loss, whether to consider them more as objects of reproach for the depravity of their manners, or of pity, at viewing the state of national debasement, to which they have been precipitated by the declension of their empire.

ON the 8th, at Shahroot, also called Buftan, four fursungs, a small but populous town. From Nowblehuckum, the road lay about twelf to Towrone, whence it had, I apprehend, a west by north direction to Shahroot.* The horse which I had hired from the hadji to carry me to Mazanderan, having died this day, I was detained on the road to take care of my little chattels, which must have been lost, had not some of my ka-filah acquaintances each conveyed a portion, though their horses were much jaded.

PASSING over a fertile well watered plain, which surrounds, to a wide space, the town of Shahroot, I came late in the evening to the karavanfara, where I found the Ghilan seid in possession of an apartment, which he had taken for our joint use. The cold was here extremely intense, and had reached the point, which the Persians with a peculiar force of expression, term the Zerb Zim-mistan, the stroke of winter. The snow fell thickly about us,

* The Tabrez pilgrims left Shahroot, about five miles to the right or westward, and proceeded towards their own country by the way of Simna and Casbin.

and the piercing north wind made every creature shrink from its blast; nor were there many cordials at hand to qualify these rigors.

FIRING is scarcer here than in any part of Khorasan, it is of a bad quality for fuel, and much of it is of a green wood. Our lodging had no aperture but the door, which the seid, to screen himself from the cold kept shut; nor could my most earnest intreaty obtain any opening for the discharge of the smoke. The only material differences indeed existing between us, arose from this, and another despotic arrangement of the seid, which used to cause some warm debates.

It was my business, being the more active member, to purchase and bring in fuel, and before day light, to procure water and a light to warm the seid, and enable him to perform the ablution preparatory to prayer, an omission of which he would have dreaded as the precursor of some dire calamity. The seid consented to kindle the fire, an office which I could never perform without suffering acute pain in my eyes from the smoke. Thus were our labours, on principles fair enough, mutually divided; but when we came to enjoy the fruits of it, this descendant of his prophet, wrapped in a large cloak made of sheep skins, would take so unaccommodating a post at, or rather over our small fire, which was in a manner embraced by the extended skirts of his garment, that I received no warmth; and I should not have known that a fire was in the room, but for a profusion of smoke. I never remember

ber to have suffered so much inconveniency from the cold ; nor could all my wardrobe, heaped at once on my body, keep me from thivering. My anger would often break out to an extreme height at the seid's total seizure of the fire-place, and excited very impassioned language ; but which he never failed to allay, by setting forth, that he was old and infirm, that he had foregone all his domestic comforts, which were many, to visit in the depth of winter a distant shrine, and that in consideration of a deed so meritorious, and also of his holy descent, it was my duty to assist and indulge his wants.

My disposition towards him, and a knowledge of most of the facts set forth, made his arguments unanswerable ; and in return for the surrender of the hearth, I was invited to Ghilan, where he promised to give me a wife out of his family, and suitable provision for my maintenance. Such was the ordinary result of our bickerings, and it always tended to make the connection more cordial. In my little disputes on the road, the seid gave me vigorous support, and when any particular enquiry was made about my person, which it sometimes produced, he would immediately assert that I belonged to him. I have been received as his son, by those who only knew us en passant ; nor did our appearance discredit the belief, for we were naturally of a fair complexion, of the same stature, with greyish eyes.

At Shahroot we were frequently visited by a Mazanderan
shoe-

shoemaker,* the most effervescent zealot, that ever counted his beads or entered a mosque. Having thrown aside his tools and committed the shop to the management of his wife, he had laid out the greatest portion of his property on a horse, and a large koran, and made the grand tour of all the celebrated pilgrimages in Persia. But he grievously lamented that the narrow state of his fortunes, would not permit a visitation at the holy tomb of his prophet, which only could make his death easy, and his assurance of Heaven well founded. Exclusive of the ordained prayers, he practised many of a subsidiary quality, which might be termed the half notes of supplication, and these were incessantly whined out with a deep nasal tone, and sometimes when his spirit was violently agitated, he would discharge them with a bellow, as if he meant to batter down the gates of Paradise by storm.

THIS shoemaker was a little man, extremely irascible, and though immersed in devotion, he did not shew the smallest remission in the management of his temporal concerns. In an altercation with the seid, about the adjustment of a very small account, not more than three halfpence, a furious contest arose which terminated wholly in favor of the shoemaker, his language which run with an obstreperous fluency, stunned and greatly ter-

* The Persian shoemaker is not as in India of the lowest ranks of the people, but classes among the most reputable tradesmen of his country.

rified

rified my companion, who hearing himself in a breath called Christian, Jew, and Infidel, fled from the combat with precipitancy. This said shoemaker, by an ill-timed intrusion, had discovered me taking some money out of my purse; and immediately retiring, declared to all the people of the karavansera, that the kachmiry, my travelling name at that time, was possessed of a large treasure in gold and diamonds, which he himself had seen.

SUCH a discovery in a country governed even by the most salutary laws, might have endangered my property and person, but in this quarter of the world, where a man's throat is often cut for the fee simple of his cloak, it placed me in eminent peril. But the chain of favorable events, little strengthened by my own merits, which had propitiously conducted me from the banks of the Ganges, through many an inhospitable track, still continued to lead me on safely.

HAVING no important matter to lay before you, I must extend my egotisms, and inform you that Hadji Mahomet, having now arrived in the territory of the Mazanderan chief, by whom he was favored, threw off all reserve; he plainly told me, that instead of looking to him for a future conveyance, I should think myself fortunate in not being charged with the price of his horse, and the damage done to his wares. Seeing him equally empowered as disposed to do me an injury, I cheerfully cancelled my engagements with him, on the proviso of obtaining his protection during the journey to Mazanderan.

SHAH-

SHAHROOT, with its independant districts including Nasirabad, pertains properly, I believe, to the Khorasan division, though it now holds of Astarabad,* which with Mazanderan and Hazaar-Tirreeb is governed by Aga Mahomed Khan, one of the most important chiefs, now remaining in Persia. The town of Shahroot is small and surrounded in some parts with a slight earthen wall. The houses from a want of wood are built of unburnt bricks, and covered with a flat arch of the same materials.

MANY people are seen in this vicinity, whose noses, fingers, and toes, have been destroyed by the frost, which is said to be severer at Shahroot, than any part of Persia. The principal traffick of this district arises from the export of cotton, unwrought and in thread, to Mazanderan; and the returns from thence are made in Russian bar-iron and steel, a little broad-cloth, chiefly of Dutch manufacture, copper and cutlery. Sugar, from its high price, being rarely used by the lower class of Persians, they have adapted to its purposes a syrup called Sheerah, made of the inspissated juice of grapes; but it seemed to be of an irritating and inflammable quality; and most of them mix with their food the expressed juice of the sour pomegranate, which makes a high flavored and salubrious acid.

On the the 17th of January, I joined a cotton kafilah, and

* Shahroot lies about one hundred miles to the eastward of the town of Astarabad.

proceeded

proceeded to Dhey* Mollah, a small walled village, four fursungs. The horse which I had hired at Shahroot was strong and well paced, and promised to be a very valuable acquisition, as a great part of the Mazanderan road, lies over a mountainous country, covered with forests and intersected by rapid streams.

AT Dhey Mollah, the seid and I were entertained with cordial hospitality; a benefit wholly ascribed to the inherent and contingent virtues of my companion, who from descent, as well as his late arduous pilgrimage, had a twofold claim on the benevolence of his countrymen. I should be deficient indeed, in ordinary gratitude, did I not feel the kind offices of this seid, who smoothed the many inconveniencies which often crossed my way, and procured for me accommodations not attainable by common travellers. The fruits of this village, some of which were yet fresh, are in great estimation, particularly the pomegranet, which is not inferior to that of Hadjiabad. This quarter of Persia produces a variety of vegetables, as cabbages, carrots, peas, and turnips; the latter of an excellent kind, and composes in the season a principal portion of the food of the inhabitants.

ON the 18th, at Tauck, a small fort, five and a half fursungs. This day an intense frost, which had congealed all the standing water, kept me shivering with cold during the first part of the journey. About eight miles to the south-east of Tauck, stands

* Dhey in the Persic, signifies a village.

1 on a spacious plain, the town of Dimgam, whose lofty minarets are seen at a great distance. This plain has become famous, in the latter annals of Persia, for a victory obtained by Nadir Shah, before the period of his sovereignty, over the Afghan Ashruff, who then held possession of Ispahan. The battle which was severe but decisive, twelve of thirty thousand Afghans being it is said, either killed or taken, advanced Nadir high in the estimation of Shah Thamas, who was present in the action. As a distinguished mark of his favor, and one of the most honourable, which the Persian princes used to confer on a subject, he permitted Nadir to be denominated the royal slave, by the title of Thamas Kuli.*

It would afford me a sensible pleasure, were I enabled to point out to you, any monuments of the former grandeur and magnificence of the Persian empire, which has been seen to run a long course of glory, and to often combat with success the legions of Rome; yet where are now the Roman eagles, that were wont to stun the world with the cry of victory? Where are now the steeled bands of Persia, who insulted the corpse of a Roman general and exhibited a captive Cæsar, as a gazing stock to barbarous nations? They have been smote by the destructive hand of time, which points with derision at their puny race, and at the instability of

*-This event which is mentioned in Frazer's account of Nadir Shah, happened in the year 1729.

human

human power. It is in the south of Persia, where the relics of its ancient grandeur are to be sought, but even there, the misshapen ruins of Babylon and Persepolis faintly mark the pristine grandeur and costly taste of its princes.

THE upper provinces, though affording the grand supply of brave and hardy soldiers, were rarely visited by the luxurious monarchs of Persia, who dreading the bleak air and barren aspect of the north, established their residence in milder climates, whither they carried the improvements of knowledge and the refinements of art. Among the institutions best fitted to give permanency to the Persian empire, were it invested with individual sovereignty, policy would urge the removal of its capital to Khorasan, famous for the salubrity of its air, and the military ability of its inhabitants. Its situation is also well adapted for checking the incursions of the Tartar and Afghan nations, and it possesses a city,* held by the Persians, in enthusiastic reverence.

ISPAHAN and Shiraz, seated in the centre of a country enjoying a soft serenity of air, and replete with the various incitements to luxury, must soon enervate their inhabitants and promote the influence of corruption. The Persians say that, Kareem Khan, one of the late chiefs of the southern provinces, was often urged by his officers to carry his arms into Khorasan, a conquest

* Muschid.

which would necessarily have given him the supreme dominion of Persia; but though brave and enterprising, he had too long indulged in the pleasures of Shiraz, and used to palliate his reluctance to the proposed expedition, by observing that after the long and dangerous siege of a small fort, nothing would be found in it, but a few bags of chopped straw for his horse. Yet he must have been aware that Khorasan would have reinforced his army with those soldiers, who empowered Nadir to expel the Turks and Afghans from Persia, and overthrow the empire of India. The northern regions were long the nursery of a hardy and predatory militia, who from their bleak plains and mountains, were wont to pour their force upon the nations of the south, but who in their turn felt the force of fiercer and more barbarous tribes, until continued emigrations wasted the stock, and withheld the power of foreign conquest.

ON the 19th, at Killautau, five and a half fursungs, an open village situate on the declivity of a hill. This day's journey led over a gradual ascent, interspersed with low wood, and scattered spaces of arable land. This being the last station on the road, where bread is to be procured on the east side of the Mazanderan limits, I procured a necessary supply.

ON the 20th, at Killausir, five and a half fursungs, a range of ruined buildings on an eminence, a mile's distance to the northward of the small village of Hirroos. The proprietor of my horse, a carrier, went out of the road from this place to visit his family residence,

dence, and wished much to carry me with him ; the deviation from our track being but short, I had consented to the proposal, and was about turning into the path which led to his village, when Haçji Mahomet arrived and prevented me.

As this was among the very few marks of goodness which I experienced from the hadji, to notice it, is but simple justice to his character, of which perhaps, you are already impressed with an ill opinion. Taking me aside, he enjoined me, in a manner which evinced an honest concern, not on any pretence to proceed to the carrier's village; that the story of the shoemaker had circulated a general belief of my great wealth, and that the carriers had been heard in concerting schemes to rob, and even destroy me; that if such was their design, there were few actions, he observed, however atrocious, which these men would not perpetrate, when plunder was the object; and that the situation of the village, which was detached and inhabited only by their families, would equally facilitate the purpose, as preclude a discovery.

THIS representation determined me against leaving the party; but having before consented to accompany the carrier, to whom the cause of the refusal could not be assigned, I imposed the task upon the hadji, who immediately making it his own business, told the carrier, in a stern tone, that as I was under his charge, he would not permit me to be separated from him. Though the carrier continued to urge his purpose by a long and strenuous

strenuous argument, he was overruled by the hadji, who by some degree of compulsion, consigned my horse to the charge of another person. As we rode on, the hadji congratulated my near escape from a combination, which must have been fatal to my person, or deprived me of my property ; for that many robberies were committed in these parts, and usually accompanied by murder.

THIS night I lodged in the remains of a bath, which seemed to have pertained to some place of greater note, than the appearance of the adjacent ruins indicated. The Ghilan seid had not joined me in the latter part of the journey, according to a usage observed by us, for adjusting the concerns of our evening meal, but more prudently went to Hirroos, where he was well received. Being now habituated to the seid's company, which had become equally amusing and convenient, for even our little disputes had a risible tendency, I sensibly felt its loss. Though our acquaintance was of such short duration, I already began to esteem this man as a trusty friend ; so natural and immediate is the propensity to cleave to what gives us solace and relieves our anxiety ; nor is any object more completely vested with this property, than a pleasant companion.

CORDIAL connections and the interchange of good offices, nowhere make a quicker progress than in the course of a journey: Travellers, aware of the approach of a period, which is to cause a general, probably a final separation, occupy to the best advantage, the limited extent of their associations ; and as few selfish views have

have time to spring up, these contingent compacts usually abound in good humour and good faith. In India, they have in common circulation, as a sentence expressive of the pleasures arising from cursory societies and parties, casually formed, "Enjoy this meeting as a gift snatched from fate; for the hour of departure stands on your head." Being now about to enter a province, different in its aspect and production from that of Khorasan, I will here draw the line of division, which may be done with the more propriety at Killasir, as it will also mark the eastern limit of Hazaar Jireeb,* a small district dependant on Mazanderan.

FROM Shahroot, the road has nearly a western direction, through a country generally open. Low hills are also seen at wide intervals. The soil is a mixture of sand and earth, and well cultivated as far as the vicinity of Killantau, where the vallies become more contracted, and leave but small spaces for agriculture. The sides of the hills are chiefly appropriated to the pastures of sheep, which are numerous and of an excellent kind.

ON the 21st, at Challoo, four furlongs, a small open village, on the eastern side of the base of a steep hill, and close on the brink of a rapid stream, which was dashed with a bold and beautiful effect on the rocks that lay thickly scattered in its bed. We had now entered a country overspread with mountains and forests, in which were many oak trees, but their dwarfish appearance

* Hazaar in the Persic, signifies a thousand, and Jireeb, a measurement of Land.

shewed

shewed that they wanted a kinder soil and climate. At Challoo, the seid largely reaped the fruits of his pilgrimage and his sacred descent. He and consequently his associate, for he never failed to divide with me the good things which fell to his lot, were lodged in a mosque, and hospitably treated by the inhabitants, who supplied us in the first instance with great store of fuel, which enabled us to hold out against a heavy storm of snow, and a piercing north wind; and without which, indeed, our spacious and airy apartment must have been untenable.

It was with pleasure I again saw an open village; it exhibited a rustic simplicity and a peaceful confidence, which I think could not have existed within a rampart. The inhabitants also, if their kindness to us has not biased me too much in their favor, seemed to be more civilized and humane, than the people of Khorasan. The houses here are built with flat roofs, supported with large beams, which the adjacent forests plentifully supply. A continuance of the storm, detained us on the 22d, at Challoo, where we found no abatement of the hospitality of the inhabitants, who furnished every thing that could render our situation commodious.

On the 23d, in the morning, our party moved and penetrated through a mountainous country, intersected with rivulets, and closely covered with large trees, which being stripped of their leaves, I could not ascertain the different species, nor could the carriers, whose only knowledge seems to consist in driving horses. Halted,

at

On the 24th, proceeded five furlongs through the forest. In the evening, while I was riding alone, the party, which had proceeded a short way before me, turned quickly into the wood, and came to their station-ground. It was in vain that I endeavoured to trace any marks of men or horses; for the ground to a great extent was strewed with leaves. My horse, on having for some time lost sight of the party, became restless, and I thought much terrified. It neighed incessantly, and though a willing, active animal, would not move in any direction but with reluctance. My situation grew alarming; it was growing dark, and I found myself bewildered in an immense forest, with scarcely the hope of obtaining relief during that night.

IN searching for a spot to fasten the horse, and lay myself down, good fortune threw in my way two men, who were driving a loaded bullock and an afs. Without noticing my embarrassment, which they might have made an ill use of, or even making any enquiries, I learned that a part of the kafilah had proceeded on the road which they were pursuing, and going with them about two miles, I found Hadji Mahomet, with some other passengers, refreshing themselves on a small plain, skirted by a stream of

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water. The proprietor of the horse, who had followed, expressed much displeasure at my quitting him, which he ascribed to the council of the hadji, whom he spoke of with a sneer, and laughed at the sort of protection which I had chosen.

ON this night was seen by most of the passengers, a star, with a brightly illuminated tail, which I apprehend, from its form and quick motion, must have been a comet. Hadji Mahomet now became profuse in his offers of service; he promised me every accommodation at Mazanderan, as a supply of cloths, for I was ill apparelled, a proper place of lodging, and to dispatch me with safety to the quarter of my destination. This man, though one of the most acute and knowing of his sect, did not seem to entertain any idea of my being a Christian; yet he suspected the truth of my narrative, or rather, he did not believe a word of it; but imagined that I was a trader in jewels, which were concealed about my person.

DESIROUS of knowing the state of the Russian navigation, on the Caspian sea, I had sought the information with too much earnestness, which created a suspicion at Shahroot, that I was a Russian, escaped from the captivity of the Tartars, and returning to my own country. But this conjecture ceased, when it was known that I had come from the eastern side of Persia.

ON the 24th, proceeded five furlongs, through the forest. The greatest part of this day's journey, lying over steep hills of a moist clayey soil, became of difficult access to our cattle,

The

The carriers of this road, usually employ mares for the conveyance of merchandize, being more tractable than stallions, and requiring less attendance. They are indeed as quiet as any domestic animal, and though feeding at large, during the night, they never strayed from the vicinity of the station.

On returning this evening, from a small excursion into the forest, I found that my Ghilan associate had left his quarter, and gone over to the person who has been before mentioned, as the travelling assistant of Hadji Mahomet. He was also a native of Ghilan, well known to the feid, and being stout and hale, had previously to their departure, agreed to be the feid's assistant during the pilgrimage; it was a concern of moment to this old infirm man, in the various accidents to which a long and harrassing journey was liable, to have so capable a companion; and the Ghilane, to corroborate the sincerity of his offer, had formally pledged himself on the koran. There was every reason to credit the feid's relation of this compact, for he was an inviolable observer of the truth, and I have myself often witnessed the ill treatment which he experienced from his countrymen. But being now near home, where a retaliation might be feared, he had assumed so genuinely the semblance of contrition, that in the space of my short absence, the feid's full forgiveness was obtained, and the promise of future union. On seeing me, the feid seemed embarrassed, but said nothing, and while I was preparing a slender supper, my attention was roused by a loud noise of altercation

from the Ghilan quarter, where I saw a furious debate waging between the members of the new alliance. The old pilgrim soon returned to me, entreating with many confessions of his credulous folly, to occupy his former station.

ON the 25th, completed, in a journey of five fursungs, the passage of the forest, and halted on its western edge. This day we frequently crossed the Mazanderan river, which, after winding in various directions, takes a northwest course through the flat quarter of the province, and falls into the Caspian sea at Muschid Sir. This stream is rapid among the hills, but fordable for laden horses. And on reaching the plains, it flows with an easy current. At a toll-house within the skirt of the forest, the merchants paid a small duty, and I was assessed a few pence, on the score of being a stranger.

IN my way through this extensive forest, I did not see the vestige of a habitation, nor any culture, except some very narrow strips of land, thinly interspersed at the base of the hills. But the vallies now opened and exhibited a pleasing picture of plenty and rural quiet. The villages all open and neatly built; the verdant hills and dales, encircled by streams of delicious water, presented a scene that gave the mind ineffable delight. The air, though in winter, was mild, and had the temperature of an English climate in the month of April. This change of weather, effected within so short a space of time, arises from the low situation of the province, its near vicinity to the Caspian sea, and the
shelter

shelter of the adjacent mountains. The sheep in numerous flocks were feeding on all sides, but they are of a less size than those of Khorasan, and have not the large ponderous tail which is peculiar to this animal, in the countries lying between the Indus and the eastern confines of Mazanderan; neither is their flesh so fat or well tasted.

On the 26th, at Sari, three fursungs, a fortified town and the residence of Aga Mahomed Khan, the chief of Mazanderan, Astabad, and some districts situate in Khorasan. The country in this day's journey was flat and woody, interspersed with small streams, and bounded to the north-east and south-west by a low range of hills. The kafilah having halted about two miles to the southward of Sari, the seid and I walked into the town, which we found had grievously suffered by the effects of a late fire. We were stopped at the gate-guard, which was under the charge of an Abyssinian slave,* who after making the common enquiries permitted us to pass. The market of Sari is plentifully supplied with provisions, among

* A native of this quarter of Africa, is denominated Hubshi, among the Mahometans, and is held in high estimation in Asia, for a supposed characteristic fidelity to the service in which he is employed. Abyssinians are frequently seen about the persons of princes, where they hold stations of confidence. And at the Porte, as eunuchs, they are entrusted with the whole interior management of the imperial harem; the females of this tribe, though deficient in those external charms, which are so eagerly sought after by the Mahometans, and which indeed diffuse pleasure among all the sons of men, are also greatly prized for many domestic virtues, and especially for their chastity.

which

which is seen the grey mullet, a fish abounding in all the rivers which fall into the southern shore of the Caspian sea.

SARI is rather a small town, but crowded with inhabitants, many of whom are merchants of credit, who resort thither for the purpose of supplying the chief and his officers with articles of foreign produce. A society of Armenians is established in the vicinity of the town, where they exercise a various traffic and manufacture a spirit distilled from grapes, of which Aga Mahomed drinks freely, though this habit does not seem to operate to the prejudice of the people. This chief has the reputation of being attentive to business, and of possessing an extensive capacity, which is indeed obvious to common notice, throughout all parts of his government. The walls of the town are kept in good condition and the ditch though narrow is deep, and sufficiently tenable against any force now existing in this country.

A PALACE has been lately built at Sari, of commodious neat structure, though of limited size, and has a more compact appearance than any building which I have seen in Persia. The front is occupied by a small esplanade, on which are mounted three pieces of cannon, with carriages of good workmanship fixed on three wheels. Aga Mahomed, a Persian, of the Kajar tribe,* is about
fifty

* A word in the provincial language of Mazanderan, signifying a rebel or a deserter, and the name of an extensive tribe, chiefly residing in Mazanderan and Astarabad.
ter,

fifty years of age, and the son of Mumtaz Khan,* who in the distractions which involved Persia, subsequent to the death of Nadir Shah, stood forth among the various competitors for the throne, and was for a short period, declared head of the empire by a large party of the people. But he was ultimately compelled to yield to the superior force of Kareem Khan, by whom he was put to death. The family of Mumtaz Khan, falling also into the hands of the conqueror, he deprived Aga Mahomed, the eldest son of virility. I am not enabled to give you any satisfactory information of the events which promoted the enlargement of this chief, and in quick gradation invested him with the possession of an extensive territory.

IN a country where the evolutions and caprice of fortune are exhibited in infinite multiplicity, and her wheel whirls with a velocity that confounds observation, where the slave of the morning is often seen at noon exalted on the ruins of his master, it becomes a perplexed disguising talk, to trace the steps which lead to honors and power; nor does it adequately reward the enquiry of reason. Such transitions may be summarily ascribed to the general depravity of a people, who unrestrained by laws, or even

Like the Rajahpoots of India, the Kajars are usually devoted to the profession of arms, and they compose the largest portion of the soldiery of these provinces. They are mentioned by Mr. Hanway in his relation of his transactions at Astarabad.

* He was also called Fultah Ali Khan.

the

the habits of justice, give a loose to every impulse, which promises the gratification of ambition, avarice or revenge.

AGA Mahomed has become, since the death of Kareem Khan, the most powerful chief of Persia. He has many brothers, one of whom, Jaffier Kooly, governs Balfrosh, the principal town of Mazanderan ; but his conduct is narrowly watched and his authority so limited, that he cannot issue a passport to a Russian trading vessel without the assent of Aga Mahomed. The forces of this chief, on occasions of service, may amount to fifteen thousand cavalry, which were embodied in the course of the last year, when he overrun Ghilan, and plundered Reshd, the residence of Hydeat Khan, the ruler of the province, who, with his family and treasure, sought refuge in the Russian factory of Enzillee* until the Mazanderan troops had evacuated the country.

It appears that Aga Mahomed is preparing another attack, which is thought will speedily be effected, unless he is deterred by the power of the Russians, who having long derived extensive advantages from the commerce of Ghilan, seem disposed to espouse its cause. Aga Mahomed is at this time, the only Persian chief bordering on the Caspian sea, whom the empire of Russia has yet made tributary, or rendered subservient to its policy.

* Situate near the border of the Caspian sea, about six miles to the northward of Reshd.

ABOUT a year ago a small Russian squadron arriving at Ashroff, a capacious bay on the Asterabad shore, the commanding officer directed a large building to be constructed near the shore, for the purpose of accommodating his crew, and probably to lay the basis of some future plan. When the building was nearly finished, Aga Mahomed to whom this procedure had given alarm, invited the commodore, an inexperienced young man, with his officers, to an entertainment given at Asterabad, on the celebration of some Mahometan festival. Many of the Russians with their officer went to the Persian feast, where they were suddenly seized and put into confinement. Aga Mahomed then affected to express much resentment at the conduct of the Russians, in having erected without permission, so large and solid a building in his country. It was in vain that the Russian expatiated on the treachery of the act, and so glaring a violation of hospitality. He was resolutely answered, that unless his men were directed to demolish the building, the party should be detained in prison, and perhaps meet with a worse fate.

THE commodore dreading the effects of this threat, dispatched the necessary orders to the squadron ; and when the work was performed, he and his companions were released. The officer was soon after dismissed from the command of the Caspian squadron, and banished from the court. The empress severely censured his breach of military conduct, which on account of youth, and a regard for his family, she observed had not been noticed with the

deserved punishment. Aga Mahomed lately received an address from the Russian government, threatening him, it is said, with a severe vengeance for the insult offered to their flag, unless he made a speedy atonement. But it does not seem that this chief is disposed to shew any respect to the requisition; and if credit is to be given to a general rumour, another descent on Ghilan may be soon expected, the probability of which is corroborated by a prohibition of all intercourse with the inhabitants of that province.

ON the 27th, we left Sari, and proceeding five fursungs, through a country interspersed with plain and forest, halted on the skirt of a wood near the high road. At half the distance of this day's journey, crossed a fordable stream, which runs to the left or north-west, and falls into the Mazanderan river. The carriers were stopped at the passage, and ordered to convey on their horses a quantity of stones, and place them in certain swampy parts of the great road, leading from Sari to Balfrosh; which, it is said, was first constructed by Shah Abbas, and appears to have been cut through a forest.

AT three miles to the southward of our last night's halting place, we passed through the small village of Alhabad, which has a daily market well supplied with bread, cheese, and such provisions as are adapted to the refreshment of travellers, for the use of whom it seems to have been wholly established.

ON the 29th of January, our party arrived at Balfrosh, four and a half fursungs. The road this day was the worst I ever had

had travelled on, and required, in the winter season, continued labour to make it passable. Though deep ditches are extended on each side and drains cut across, to carry off the extraordinary moisture of the soil, we proceeded with much difficulty and hazard. The carriers at certain stations, were required to deliver their respective portions of stones, and the defaulters, among whom I was classed, were detained by the officers of government; here I might have incurred a long delay, had not the Ghilan seid interposed his good offices for me as a pilgrim and his friend. It was then soon seen in what a favourable light we were beheld. Our hands were even kissed in token of reverence. The proprietor of my horse having no religious virtues to plead, and his quantity of stones being found very insufficient, he was not permitted to pass; and while he with many others were endeavouring to qualify the demand, the seid and I agreed to proceed to Balfrosh, that we might be sheltered against the weather, which this day had set in with drifts of small rain and a severe cold.

IN high anticipation of the pleasures in store for us at the capital, we were overtaken by the carrier, who foaming with rage, at this my second desertion, as he termed it, accused me of an attempt to steal his mare. Nor was his passion allayed, until I promised him a large dish of pillaw, to be ready at his arrival in Balfrosh.

AT the distance of two miles on the south side of the town, is seen a small island in the river, where Shah Abbas erected a

C c.2

palace,

palace, whose roof with the bridge of communication, has lately been applied by the governor of Balfrosh to some domestic purposes. After paying double the stipulated hire, and the fine in pillaw, I discharged the carrier who, like all those of his profession within my knowledge, was an arrant knave. But knavery constitutes a grand branch of his profession, and does not heavily affect the purse of the traveller, who if he wishes to journey on with comfort, and have his name puffed, should heartily feed his carrier; and as the common nature of man requires indulgence, occasionally wink at his roguery. Not to govern too much has been a maxim of long standing in the policy of nations, nor is it less necessary to the welfare and quiet of domestic œconomy.

AT Balfrosh I was informed that three Russian vessels were lying in the road of Muschid Sir, and would sail in a few days to Baku.* It now behoved me to act warily, and to wind up with discretion an adventure which had hitherto been successful, and had at this place reached a crisis, which must either produce a happy, or a dangerous issue. To this period I had assumed, with good fortune, the Mahometan character, without which, the journey I think could not have been performed, especially from Turkish to the Caspian sea. I had been admitted, without reserve, into the society of Mahometans, and had lived at

* A port on the western coast of the Caspian sea.

the

the same board with the most zealous and scrupulous, some of whom, being now on the spot, would, on a discovery of my person, inveterately resent the deceit. It was first expedient to quiet the mind of the seid, who lodging in the same apartment, must necessarily become acquainted with my departure. Telling him that I was going to make a pilgrimage at a tomb,* much resorted to by the Persians, in the vicinity of Muschid Sir, and leaving a few things which would be useful, I bade him adieu with an air of unconcern, yet breathing a silent, fervent wish, that this old man, whom I was never to see again, might experience every good in the dispensation of providence.

MUSING on the scenes which of late had been shifted with a rapid diversity, and on the singular, yet interesting connections which I had formed in the course of my journey, I travelled on to Muschid Sir; a scattered village, situate on the eastern bank of the Mazanderan river, about ten miles distant from Balfrosh, and two from the Caspian sea. On seeing the Russian quarter, I sent back a horse which I had hired, and presented myself to a person who was pointed out to me as the master of a Russian vessel; but he did not understand any language that I spoke. To obviate this embarrassment, an interpreter was called in, and being informed that he was a Rus-

* The place of interment of a son of Mouza Kazim, one of the twelve Imaums of the Persians.

fian,

fian, I related my story without reserve; that I was an English gentleman, who from motives of curiosity and pleasure, had travelled from Bengal, through the northern parts of India and Persia, and that I now intended to proceed by the way of Russia to England.

THE linguist expressed surprize at the relation, which he seemed to doubt; but a repetition, accompanied with that confidence which only arises from truth, noticing also that I was enabled to reward any good office, gave my relation credit, at least with the Russian. The master agreed to convey me to Baku, whither his vessel was consigned; and observed, that the commanding officer of a frigate lying at that port, would give the necessary directions for my future procedure. The matter being thus happily arranged, I was invited to partake of a mess of fish-broth, served up in a large wooden bowl; of which the master, six or seven sailors, and myself, made a hearty meal; to me it was a regale; both from its being really a savory one, and from the manner of participation, to which I had been long a stranger.

THE Russian habitations at Muschid Sir, are rudely constructed, and far from being clean. The sides are about five feet high, and composed of branches of trees, twisted between stakes, stuck at small distances in the ground; and the roof is of thatched straw. The furniture, equally simple and coarse, consists of some narrow wooden beds, a long board, raised in the centre to eat at, and a few stools, or buckets inverted to sit on. But the practice of
living

living hard, in all its variations, from eating stale barley bread to sleeping on snow, had formed me into a complete veteran, so that the Russian cabin, with its assemblage of rough utensils, was to my sight a garnished hotel. And the knife, wooden spoon, and platter, luxuries of a superior order.

IN the first days of my residence at this place, I sensibly experienced a refreshment of mind and body. I had been accustomed to rise in the morning before day-break, with my hands and feet genearely benumbed with cold, when after packing my baggage, I was obliged to take a part in the business of the camel-driver or the carrier; nor did the end of the day's journey, often bring with it more than the barest accommodation, or afford me much matter of intellectual gratification. But these inconveniencies were all done away, and my meals as my sleep, became salutary and regular. Being thus relieved from labour, anxiety, and the incessant task of supporting a feigned character, I thought myself happy, and as happiness largely arises from comparison and the excursions of fancy, to which I now gave an ample scope, this was perhaps the most pleasurable period of my life.

THE Caspian sea presented a grand scene, and its waves dashing against the shore, produced with a delightful sound, the exulting retrospect of dangers passed; yet I endeavoured to check this rising folly of presumption, ill suited to the nature of man, by considering that the accomplishment of my journey was greatly promoted by a train of events, in which my own exertions had
but

but a trivial share. Common tradition, and certain ideas which are arbitrarily located in the minds of most men, had figured to me a Russian, tall, robust, of a fierce aspect, of barbarous manners, and uncouth deportment. In short, truth obliges me to say that I had ever assimilated the idea of an *ursa major* with a native of Russia, and it would have been equally difficult to have separated these figures in my mind, as meagerness from a Frenchman, or corpulence from a Hollander. But I must crave pardon of the Russian nation at large, for this and other erroneous opinions which I had formed of it.

IN the first instance, I saw that the Russians were evidently of lower stature, than most of the northern people of Europe, and generally had the thick form of a Tartar, with his broad visage. Those who are not in the service of government, encourage the growth of the beard; they wear a long outer vest, which is fastened round the middle with a girdle; their shirt, like that of the Mahometans, hangs over the breeches, which are short, and they usually wear boots. Their hair falls loosely down the neck, and they cover the head, when abroad, with a cap or bonnet, which is taken off in the house, and in the interchange of courtesy. They possess an address and suavity of manners, even in ordinary life, which would not disgrace men of a much higher class, among nations deemed the most polite. The entrance of a Russian into a room at first surprized me; for, instead of noticing any person in it, he uncovers his head, and with an air of humble reverence, offers

offers up a prayer to the picture of the virgin and an infant Jesus, which is exhibited in the most conspicuous part of every apartment. Having performed this ceremony he salutes the company, and at departure he observes the like usage. I am by no means empowered to ascertain the virtual opinions which the Russians entertain of their national religion, or to what extent they may operate in a moral tendency ; but I can with confidence say, that their exterior observance of religious duties is accompanied with a reverential attention ; and is void of that fantastic mummery which has thrown a ridicule on many parts of the Romish worship.

I HAD not long been a member of the Russian society, when Hadji Mahomed appeared at Muschid Sir. On perceiving him, I was impressed with an involuntary dread, and had my creed admitted the tenet, I should have seen in Hadji Mahomed my evil genius. Retiring to the house I waited with anxiety for the issue of his operations, which I knew would be hostile to my welfare ; when, after some little time the master of the vessel coming in, informed me that the hadji had made many enquiries about my situation, and spoke of me in terms of regard. The Russian expressed much surprize at hearing me lament this intelligence, which he said, ought to give me pleasure, as Hadji Mahomed was a person of eminent note at Mazanderan, and might assist me in procuring a passport, without which I now learned no person could leave the province. A storm now began to

threaten me from all quarters ; the person who had been my first interpreter, was not as he said, a native of Russia, but an Armenian, and with a treachery not uncommon to his tribe, had circulated among the Persians of Muschid Sir, the information he had been entrusted with, embellished with many fabrications of his own ; as that I possessed much wealth in money and jewels, and that I was a spy. This story obtained a general credit with the Mahometans, especially with Hadji Mahomed, who began to contrive plans of deriving an advantage from my troubles. The master of the vessel seeing the popular cry strong against me, became fearful of giving me shelter ; for it is necessary to mention, that the Russian traders, chiefly a low class of people, are exposed in all parts of the government of Aga Mahomed to severe oppressions and insult ; but which an advantageous traffick has induced them to overlook. And Aga Mahomed knowing the cause of their forbearance, preserves no decency in his conduct to them.

THE Russian now acquainted me, with manifest symptoms of fear, that were he to receive me without a passport, his vessel and cargoe would be confiscated. The principal freighter of the bark, Abbas Ali, a native of Baku, had shewn me from my first arrival at Muschid Sir, much kindness, and seemed desirous of relieving my embarrassment. He expressed a sorrow at the serious difficulty in which I was involved, rendered, he said, the more perplexing by the ill designs of the master of the vessel, who

who was a person of a bad character; but he of good comfort, continued he, "for I will be your friend, and do not on any pretence entrust your property to the Russian." This advice came in convenient season, and testified that Abbas Ali knew this man; for on the following day he addressed me in a long harangue, setting forth that the Persians had received intelligence of my possessing a valuable amount in specie and jewels, that my own knowledge of these people would naturally point out the insecure state of both my person and effects, and that an earnest regard to my welfare, had induced him to request that my property might be deposited in his charge, until the departure of the vessel. But the counsel of Abbas Ali, not a little strengthened by the present proposal, determined me to be the keeper of my own cash.

EITHER the resentment of a supposed want of confidence in him, or the disappointment of some sinister purpose, gave the Russian a sensible chagrin; and from that time he continued to treat me with rudeness and neglect. That I might retire from the view of the people at Muschid Sir, who were now in the habit of accumulating unfavourable conjectures of me, I desired to go, on board the vessel, and remain there until some method might be adopted to leave the country with permission; and the master having consented, though with much reluctance, to my embarkation, I departed secretly and without any impediment. From the Russian quarter the distance is about a mile and a

half to the mouth of the river, where the force of the sea has raised a long and shallow bar, navigable only by boats and small light vessels; but when the wind blows strong from the north, the passage is wholly impracticable,

THE bark lay a league from the shore in six or seven fathoms water, and was about the burthen of one hundred tons, with two masts; the largest, fixed in the centre, is of one piece and rigged with a standing mainsail, extended at the upper end by a long gaff, and at the foot with a sheet, a topsail; and an occasional topgallantsail; this last is furled before it is hoisted with flight ropes; which are broken when the sail is aloft by a pressure on the lower ropes; the fore part of the vessel is furnished with a slanting foresail, a bowsprit and jib; and on the poop stands a small mast, which carries a mizensail. The clumsy form and construction of the barks which navigate the Caspian sea, shew that little improvement has been made on them since the time of Peter the Great, who first introduced the art of ship-building into Russia. Having straight sides with a large and ponderous kitchen on the deck; these vessels sail slowly, and only with a free wind. As they lye much in open roads, the Caspian being scantily supplied with harbours, they are furnished with stout anchors and cables, apparently of a larger size than is necessary; though there is often found full occasion for such aids to withstand the furious gales of wind and high breaking waves, which prevail in this sea.

I NOW

I now learned that the Russian whom I have hitherto termed the master, was not a mariner, but an agent* who is appointed to manage the commercial business of the vessel and disburse the sailing charges. The crew consisted of a master,† termed boatsman, his mate, six mariners, and a cook; who from their pay and small trading privilege provide their own diet. The Russian seamen among whom I was known by the name of Gregoree, from its near resemblance to George, treated me with a cordial hospitality; nor must you imagine that I was demeaned by an unreserved association with these men, whose habits and mode of life admitted of no discrimination of rank. I sat down at their board without scruple; indeed with thankfulness; and they never omitted to present me with the highest stool, the best spoon, and with wheaten-bread, while they themselves eat that of rye.

SOME tea and sugar,‡ purchased from an Armenian, enabled me to breakfast alone in the cabin, which I occupied with the boatsman, who shewed a ready attention to all my little wants, and became as agreeable a companion, as the want of language would admit. Our common fare on board the vessel,

* Called in the Russian language, Preeaufee, a dispenser of orders.

† Many of the nautical phrases and implements in use, among the Russians have been adopted from the Dutch, from whom Peter the Great learned the art of ship-building.

‡ This sugar the produce of the West Indies, and manufactured in England, was imported at Peterburgh, whence it came into Persia, by the tract of Astracan.

consisted

consisted of a large species of fish, in Russia called the Beluka,* which was either prepared in a soup or minced with a large quantity of salt and pepper, and boiled in a cover of paste; this dish I often thought an English sailor would have called in his descriptive language, a shark dumplin. Nor was it inferior in solidity, to any fabrication of the dumplin kind; after the fish came thick pancakes, fried in a deluge of butter. I had laid in a stock of mullet, a more wholesome food than the beluka; but seeing that from a fear of being chargeable to me, my messmates refused to partake of it, I laid aside this with every other distinction, and except the tea, fared as they did.

It now appeared that obstinate difficulties were thrown in the way by the custom-master at Muschid Sir, who filled his office with equal vigilance and rapacity. Seeing me from the unfavorable predicament in which I stood, a profitable game, he directed that I should be immediately sent on shore, there to be detained, until the chief's pleasure should be known. As this man only wanted some of my money, and would have been disappointed by my formal departure from the country, I made him, through the medium of Abbas Ali, the Baku merchant, a substantial offer, but delayed the payment till the time of sailing, that no secondary demand might be preferred.

Two

* It is taken with a hook near the mouths of most of the rivers, which fall into the Caspian; its length is generally from six to eight feet, sometimes it is seen of eighteen

Two days previously to our departure, Ali Abbas came on board of the vessel, and represented that the custom-master was inexorable to every solicitation, urging that Aga Mahomed was at this juncture averse from permitting any person to leave the province, and that were he accessory to my escape, his head on the discovery, would pay the forfeit. Knowing that an interdiction had been laid on all inland passengers, and that the dispatch of the Russian had been withheld for the space of twenty days, to accomplish some purpose of government, I was aware that a certain risque was incurred by the Persian, whom I proposed to indemnify by a proper compensation; but I also observed that if he persisted in the refusal of all private negotiation, I would myself proceed to Sari, and relate my story to the chief, and he well knew that no benefit would accrue to him from the decision of his master. This argument was completely efficient, and when reinforced by some of my Hindostan gold, permission was given me to pursue whatever way I liked, except that of Sari.

BEFORE I leave this quarter of Persia, I will lay before you a brief account of its geography, with cursory observations on its former and present commerce, and its relative policy with Russia. Mazanderan which occupies the centre of the southern shore of the Caspian sea, has Asterabad on the east, Ghilan on the west, and to the northward it is bounded by the

eighteen feet, and has the head and form of a shark. This fish is not eaten by the Mahometans, who hold it unclean, from having no scales.

moun-

mountainous tract of forest which has been already noticed. Though the fort of Sari, from its strength and central situation has become the residence of the chief, Balfrosh is considered the capital of the province.

THIS town occupies an irregular oblong space, of about a mile and a half in circumference, and standing on a low moist ground, its streets are at this season of the year choaked with mud. The houses are coarsely built of brick or clay, with a flat roof, and being generally small have a mean appearance. The karavanferas of which there are four, have little of that neatness and conveniency, which is seen in those of upper Persia, and are of a much less size; but the market-place, which in the manner of Asiatic towns, forms the principal street, denotes an active traffick.

THE rice of Mazanderan is of an excellent quality; and composes the usual food of the people, who find it difficult in their marshy lands, to cultivate a sufficient quantity of wheat for common consumption, and that produced is of a coarse sort. The bread used by the higher classes of inhabitants, is made of the flour of Shirwan, a considerable amount of which is annually imported at Muschid Sir. This deficiency is in some degree, compensated to Mazanderan by the growth of sugar, which though of an inferior kind, is adequate to most of its common uses. When the general demand of this article in Persia is considered and that it is rarely produced on this side of the Indus, it might be

be naturally supposed that Mazanderan would derive extensive benefits from such a possession; especially through its navigable vicinity to the southern territories of Russia, where a large quantity is consumed, at an advanced price; yet from an ignorance in the methods of preparing and refining it, this valuable product yields but a limited utility.

AN inhabitant of Astracan, I am informed, came into this province for the purpose of establishing a manufactory of sugar, but failing in his project, no future experiment has been made. Were the Russians skilled in the process, they would be enabled, by the importation of raw sugars, to fix in their country an important and lucrative commerce. Mazanderan also produces a small quantity of silk, which is fabricated by a society of Jews; but its principal trade is maintained by a frequent intercourse with the port of Baku, which receives white and coloured calicoes, cotton, and rice, and returns bar iron of Russia, saffron, flour, and remnants of broad cloth procured from Astracan. The commerce of this quarter, which now does not employ more than four or five barks, might be largely extended, did a greater harmony exist between Aga Mahomed and the Russians; especially were the manufacture of sugar increased.

THE Persians have long attempted to navigate the Caspian sea, though with little success; their vessels are open, rudely constructed; and ill managed, seldom leaving the coast but in the season of fair weather; many of them are fitted out at Farabad, an

ordinary town, situate at the mouth of a river, thirty miles to the eastward of Muschid Sir, and now supported by a small trade in rice, salt, fish, and pottery ware. This town in the European topography of Mazanderan, bears the appearance of note, and gives its name to a province; whatever might have been the former importance of Farabad, and it is noticed with respect in Persian history, little testimony of it now exists.

THE province of Asterabad, lying on the the east side of the southern Caspian shore, affords little produce for a foreign trade; and it enjoys a refreshing temperate air, and is beautifully interspersed with hill and dale, and abundantly supplied with streams of salubrious water.

SHAH ABBAS, the most powerful prince of the Suffuee race, pleased with the climate of this province, erected a palace near the shore of the bay of Ashroff,* whither he used often to retire to avoid the heats of Ispahan.† Almost the only marine export of this province consists of dried mullets, which are cured intire by smoke, and are held in such estimation by the Russians, that two cargoes of them are annually imported at Astracan.

GHILAN the richest of the provinces bordering on the Caspian sea, extends in a western parallel from Mazanderan; it is bounded on the west by the territories of Talish and Astara; and on the

* This is the only harbour, on the southern side of the Caspian sea.

† This prince removed the capital of Persia from Casbin to Ispahan.

South

south by a range of lofty mountains, which divide it from the dependencies of Cashan and Casbin.

HYDEAT KHAN, the Ghilan chief; has relinquished Reshd, his former residence, and for the security of his wealth and family against the incursions from Mazanderan, has retired to the vicinity of Enzille, where the Russians possess a fortified factory, garrisoned by a company of soldiers, and supplied with a few pieces of cannon.*

HYDEAT KHAN is supposed to possess a revenue of two hundred thousand pounds, a great part of which arises from the produce of silk; and from this revenue, he has amassed, it is said, a considerable treasure. Here you must be cautioned against computing Persian money by your standard, for in this country, where every commodity is procured at a cheap rate, specie may fairly be reckoned at double the value which it bears in England.

HYDEAT KHAN is about sixty years of age, and according to the information of the Ghilan seid, of whom frequent mention has been made, is rapacious, tyrannical, and pusillanimous. Conscious of his inability to resist the force of Aga Mahomed Khan, he has wholly thrown himself on the protection of the

* The most accurate account of Ghilan, is found in the travels of the late Jonas Hanway, a name widely known in the annals of humanity, and deeply graven on the most distinguished monuments of his country. Some useful remarks on Ghilan are also to be collected from a book, entitled, voyages and travels through the Russian empire, Persia, &c. by William Cook, M. D.

court of Petersburgh, from which it may be said, that he derives the existence of his power, and the safety of his person. Nor will the Russians, while they enjoy such important benefits from Ghilan, fail to give him support.

THE silks of Ghilan are exported to Astracan, chiefly through the medium of Armenian merchants, subjects of Russia, who possess the larger share of the Caspian commerce. It was long believed that the silk brought into Europe from Turkey, was all produced in the Ottoman empire : but since a more conversant knowledge of Persia has been obtained, it appears that the Turkish merchants were used to resort to the provinces of Ghilan and Shirwan,* whence they transported large quantities of this commodity to the European factories of the Levant.

THE Persian silk trade continued to flow in this channel, until the year 1739, when the Russia Company of England having procured the sanction of Parliament,† sent their factors into Ghilan to establish a commerce, which should have for its object the purchase of silk, and the vent of English manufactures. They received a cordial encouragement from Reza Kouli, who at that period, governed Persia in the absence of his father, then

* Situate on the west side of the Caspian sea, where there is abundant growth of silk, but of a coarser kind, than that of Ghilan, which is esteemed the finest in Persia.

† They were vigorously opposed in England by the Levant Company, who aware of the injury which they would sustain by the Caspian trade, represented to Parliament that their charter, an exclusive one, would be violently infringed by such permission being granted to the Russia merchants.

engaged

engaged in the Indian expedition; and they remained in Ghilan until the year 1748, when the general tumult and devastation, which followed the death of Nadir, compelled them to retire and abandon an extensive amount of property.

It is seen that previously to the dissolution of the factory at Ghilan, the court of Petersburg began to entertain jealousies of the English establishment in Persia, and from their own growing knowledge of commerce and navigation, became desirous of possessing a trade which naturally pertained to their country. The government of Persia had largely contributed to increase this jealousy, by a distinguished encouragement to all English adventurers, whom it saw independent of Russia, its constitutional enemy, and capable also of enriching the kingdom, by their superior skill and spirit in trade; but above all, Persia was desirous of employing the English in the construction of vessels of war; that it might acquire the dominion of the Caspian sea.

THE first cause of the displeasure and alarm, of the court of Petersburg, at the proceedings of the English factory in Ghilan, arose from the conduct of the principal agent, John Elton,* who, on a disagreement with his associates, entered into the service of Nadir Shah, by whom he was invested with certain territories bordering on the Caspian sea, and created the commander of a

* See Hanway's Travels, for a relation of some part of the Adventures of this enterprising person.

squadron,

squadron, with which he himself, with infinite ability and labor, had furnished the Persian government.

ON the 14th of March, our vessel, filled up to the hatches, the decks also strewed over with bales and passengers, got under way, but a foul wind soon setting in, we came to an anchor. From the manner in which these vessels are navigated, laden, and altogether managed, I should be surprized if shipwrecks were not frequent in this sea. The cabin was stuffed so full of parcels and baggage, that those to whom it was allotted, were obliged to crawl in, and then they found only a scanty length and breadth, sleeping or awake: the passengers I perceived were all petty traders, who having embarked a certain property on the vessel, accompanied it in person; for there is not a sufficient credit or good faith established in Persia, to enable merchants to consign their effects to factors. The foreign trader therefore is necessitated to become a supercargoe, an occupation which for the first time, I saw in the letter of the word, verified by the adventurers sitting immediately upon their wares, whence they stirred but seldom, and were never long absent: of these people I numbered not less than seventy, who were spread over the deck, or packed in the cabin and boat; It was soon seen that the master and mariners were equally ignorant of their profession; he could scarcely discriminate the points of the compass or throw the lead; and the men, though expert at the use of the tailor's needle, and the implements of cookery, would among the most clumsy of our sailors, have been termed landsmen.

When

When I beheld this ill-constructed bark lumbered with goods and passengers, and its unskilful crew, I could not but entertain apprehensions of our safety, especially in a sea so tempestuous as the Caspian.

ON the 17th, we got under sail, and assisted by a favorable wind, we anchored on the 22d, about ten leagues to the northward of the port of Baku; and on the 24th, reached the entrance of the harbour, when the wind which had been blowing strong from the eastward, suddenly changed, and came from the land with extreme violence; but the vicinity of the shore kept the sea down, and probably prevented our destruction. The Russians, trusting to the strength of their anchors and cables, which were of the most substantial kind, went to sleep; nor did they once endeavour to prepare the vessel for the sea, in the event of its parting from the anchors, or use any means of assisting the cable which was severely strained; some of the more animated of them would occasionally open their eyes, and call out on God's mercy to shelter them from the fury of the storm. It abated on the 26th, when we entered the port of Baku, and saluted a Russian frigate, lying there, with all the swivels and musquets on board, without regard of order or count. The agent of our vessel attended the commanding officer, and in his report mentioned the story of his European passenger. It is to be noticed that the Turks and Persians, make a difference between a Russian and a native of Europe, calling the one a Feringhee, and the other a Roofs.

a Roofs. In this distinction is also included a superior estimation of the Europeans to whom they ascribe a more extensive genius and knowledge; and what I thought extraordinary, the like nominal difference is entertained by all the lower class of southern Russians.

ON board of the frigate, whither I was summoned, I related the motives and general track of my journey, and was received with a warmth of hospitality, to which neither my appearance; being clad in a very ordinary dress, or my unsupported representation had a claim. I now became informed of the general peace in Europe; and it was with a deep felt mortification, I learned from a foreigner, the entire separation of the American Colonies and their numerous people. The frigate was to sail the next day to Enzillee, to be stationed in that quarter, for the protection of the province of Ghilan, the chief of which had sometime before dispatched an envoy to the Russian camp, in Crim Tartary,* to represent his dread of Aga Mahomed, and to solicit the aid of the Russians. The agent had returned, and was accompanied by a Russian officer, who had traveled from the camp to Baku in twenty days. Part of the journey lay through the country of the Lesgui Tartars, who are a savage people and proverbially hostile to strangers; But from a dread of the Russian troops, now advanced

* Then commanded by general Potemkin, who was invested with the government of the Crim and the power of controlling the affairs of Astracan,

to their frontier, they had permitted this party to pass unmolested. The officer who spoke the Turkish language fluently, seemed to be an ingenious active man, and well fitted for a service of enterprize.

THE Ghilan envoy, then proceeding on the frigate, expressed a surprize to see me, whom he thought a Mahometan, eating at the same board with the Russian gentlemen; but when he saw a barber commencing an operation on my beard, which I took the opportunity of having shaved, he evinced great amazement and indignation; nor did he, until repeatedly informed of my real character, cease his reprehension of the act; during the process of which, he threw on me many a look of contempt; when the barber began to cut off the mustachios, he several times in a peremptory manner required him to desist, and seeing them gone, now said he, of whatever country or sect you may be, your disgrace is complete, and you look like a woman.

THUS after a growth of fifteen months, fell my beard, which in that period had increased to a great magnitude, both in length and breadth; though it had been somewhat shrivelled by the severity of the late winter; when you advert to the general importance of an Asiatic beard, to the essential services which mine had rendered, and to our long and intimate association, I trust that this brief introduction of it to your notice will not be deemed impertinent. This operation of cutting it, ought however to have been postponed till my arrival at Astracan; for my European face with an Asiatic dress, made me an object of general remark and enquiry

among the Persians; nor did I escape the censure of the Armenians, who are taught to esteem the beard a badge of respect, and even sanctity, recommended to their example by the patriarchs and primitive Christians, and when they conform in European countries to the custom of shaving it, they are ridiculed by all the Russian brethren of their tribe.

On the 27th, I went on board the frigate, then getting under way, and saw the seamen execute their work in an active, skilful manner. They hove up the anchor, and set sail with an expertness, which would not have discredited the crew of an English ship of war. The captain procured me a passage from a Greek merchant, who had come to take leave of him, and gave me a passport requiring my admission into the town of Baku, and that no molestation should be offered me by the Persian government; and the second lieutenant of the frigate, who had been my interpreter and had taken a willing part in adjusting my little wants, gave me a letter of introduction to an officer of the Russian navy, whose name was Iván Andreits.* The Greek carried me to his apartment in a karavansera, which is exclusively appropriated to the use of Christians and Sooni Mahometans.

IVAN ANDREITS, during the last Russian war with the Turks,

* Or Andrew Vits, signifying in the Russian language, John the son of Andrew. This mode of designation is held the most honorable among the ancient titles of Russia, and is exemplified, in the present grand Duke, who is particularly known, by the name of Paul Petrowitz.

com-

commanded a privateer, the property of his family, in the Mediterranean, where having performed some gallant actions, he was promoted by the empress to the rank of captain in the navy; and retiring afterwards to Astracan, he obtained from government the exclusive privilege of exporting, for a certain term, iron and steel into Persia. As we both were a little conversant in the *lingua franca*, a language commonly spoken on the coasts of the Mediterranean, a familiar acquaintance was soon produced; and the influence which he had acquired at Baku, enabled me now, a part of his family, to pass my time very pleasantly.

THE town of Baku, in the province of Shirwan, is situated on the north side of a bay, and forms nearly an equilateral triangle with one of the sides extending in a parallel with the shore. It is, I imagine, about a mile in circumference, and crowded with inhabitants, most of whom are engaged in commerce.

THE bay is capacious and sheltered by the land, against all winds except the south, whose violence is also much broken by the intervention of two small islands. The southern and largest of those islands, was, according to information of the people, united to the continent, which in that Quarter presents a low termination, but it had been insulated by the influx of the sea, whose waters have evidently encroached on the western shore of the Caspian, in the course of the last forty years.

BAKU, at the period of Mr. Hanway's travels, into Persia, had a double wall on the eastern face; but the exterior one is now

levelled by the rise of the sea, and its foundation brought within water-mark. The province of Shirwan produces a large quantity of silk, of which about four hundred tons are annually imported at Astracan; saffron of a good quality is also produced there, and constitutes a valuable article of trade. A society of Moultan Hindoos, which has long been established in Baku, contributes largely to the circulation of its commerce; and with the Armenians they may be accounted the principal merchants of Shirwan. The Hindoos of this quarter, usually embark at Tatta, a large insular town in the lower tract of the Indus, whence they proceed to Bassorah, and there accompany the karavans which are frequently passing into Persia; some also travel inland to the Caspian sea, by the road of Kandahar and Herat; but the number is small, and they grievously complain of the oppressions and insults of the Mahometans.

ON the 31st of March, I visited the Atafghah, or place of fire; and on making myself known to the Hindoo mendicants, who resided there, I was received among these sons of Brimha, as a brother; an appellation they used, on perceiving that I had acquired some knowledge of their mythology, and had visited their most sacred places of worship. This religious retirement, where the devotees worship their deity in the semblance of fire, is a square of about thirty yards, surrounded with a low wall, and contains many apartments; in each of which is a small volcano
of

of sulphureous fire, issuing from the ground through a furnace or funnel, constructed in the form of an Hindoo altar.

THIS fire is appropriated to the uses of worship, cookery, and fortifying the feeble Hindoos against the rigor of the winter season. On closing the funnel, the flame is immediately extinguished, when a hollow sound is heard, by applying the ear to the aperture, accompanied with a strong and cold current of air, which is inflamed at pleasure by placing near it any illuminated matter. The flame is of a pale clear colour, without a perceptible smoke; and emits a vapor strongly impregnated with sulphur, which considerably impeded my respiration, until by sitting on the ground I brought my head lower than the level of the furnace. The Hindoos had a wan emaciated appearance, and were oppressed by an hectic cough, which continued to affect me during my stay at the Atashghah. The ground within the enclosure, abounds in this subterraneous air, which issues from artificial channels; but in these contracted spaces, it seems only capable of producing flame by the application of a foreign fire. Exclusive of the fires pertaining to the Hindoo apartments, a large one arising from a natural cleft in an open place, incessantly burns, whence it would seem that no extraneous object is required to impart an illumination to the larger evaporations of this air. On the outside of the wall are seen many of these volcanos, which have the appearance of lime-kilns, and one of them is conveniently adapted by the Hindoos to the uses of a funeral pile. The general space which

which contains this volcanic fire, forms a low flat hill slanting towards the sea, the soil of which consists of a sandy earth intermixed with stones. No mountainous land is seen from the Atash-ghah, nor any violent eruptions of flame; nature seems here to have adopted a gentle and inoffensive medium of discharging her discordant atoms, which in other quarters of the globe shake her with convulsions, and pour around a horrid devastation.

IN the description of this natural phenomenon, I have cautiously adhered to the simple fact, without presuming to discuss its cause or properties. These are branches of science, I am little skilled in, and ill-enabled to elucidate. Had the opportunities which have been thrown in my way fallen to a Cavendish, or a Priestley, the strongest and most ornamental pillars of the fabric of natural philosophy; a larger scope of knowledge might have been opened to the world, and talents which have been long beheld with admiration, rendered still more conspicuous.

THE black and white naptha is found in the province of Shirwan, in great plenty; the first floats thinly on the surface of certain springs or ponds, whence it is collected and preserved in jars; it seems to possess many of the properties of camphire, and is successfully employed in allaying external pains and inflamed tumours. The black naptha or bitumen, is produced in the same manner as the the white, but more abundantly and on larger pieces of water, and with a scum three or four inches thick, of the consistence of tar. The houses of Baku most of which have
flat

flat roofs, are covered on the top with this material, which is found a substantial defence against the rain; and when formed into small cakes or balls with a mixture of sand, is commonly used by the lower class of people as a substitute for the fuel of wood, which in this province is thinly produced.

THIS quarter of Shirwan in aspect and the nature of its soil, resembles the province of Khorasan; there is the same want of wood and large streams, and in the winter the air is equally bleak and piercing; with the difference that in Shirwan it is subject to fogs, which, I apprehend, are caused by the vicinity of the Caspian sea. The soil yields abundant crops of good wheat and barley, the bread of which constitutes the food of the common people; the higher ranks only are enabled to procure rice, which is chiefly imported from Mazanderan and Ghilan. The mutton is fat and well tasted, being of the large tailed sheep, and is sold at the rate of one penny and three halfpence per pound. Apples, pears, grapes, and chestnuts, all of a good kind, are produced in plenty. And a wine is manufactured by the Armenians, at the town of Shahmachee,* which in flavor and substance, is not unlike the red wine of Bourdeaux; were the grapes carefully cultivated, and the process well understood, this wine would be much esteemed in Europe. The province of Shirwan has Derbent inclusively on the north; the Caspian sea on the east; the territory

* The former capital of that province.

of Astara on the south; and parts of Georgia and the districts of Gunjah on the west.

OLD Shahmachee, the former capital, is situated about seventy miles inland of Baku, and for its trade, wealth, and population, was, after Ispahan, ranked among the most flourishing cities of Persia. To punish a rebellion, which the inhabitants had raised against the government of Nadir Shah, this city was razed and depopulated; but that the empire might not be deprived of a mart, so happily placed for foreign commerce, that prince formed about ten miles to the south-west of the old city, a new Shahmachee.* Fultah Ali Khan, the chief of Shirwan, resides generally at Derbent, but he gratifies a rapacious disposition, by making frequent circuits through the province, which he severely harrasses. The vicinity of general Potemkin's army has made him fearful of its nearer approach; and he is now endeavouring by every token of respect and acknowledged dependance, to obtain a favourable connection with the Russian empire.

HAVING laid before you, the more material part of my observations on Shirwan, I cannot resist the impulse of calling your notice, for a moment to the disposition and temper of a small

* An extensive trade of silk formerly was maintained between Shahmachee and the Black sea, through which channel, large quantities of that commodity were imported into Turkey, and thence into Europe. This trade though still existing is much diminished since the Russians, by obtaining the dominion of the Caspian, have made a monopoly of the Persian silk.

but

but extraordinary portion of its present inhabitants. Human nature takes a portion of its prominent features from national prejudices, from education, and from government; nor must we exclude climate from its share of the formation. This remark arose from a view of the Atashghah at Baku, where a Hindoo is found so deeply tinctured with the enthusiasm of religion, that though his nerves be constitutionally of a tender texture, and his frame relaxed by age,* he will journey through hostile regions, from the Ganges to the Volga, to offer up a prayer at the shrine of his God.

WHEN the ambitious strides of the Russian empire, on the side of Turkey, by the late acquisitions of the Crim, are attentively considered, and its rapid progress into the most valuable provinces of Persia, we are compelled to bestow applause on the policy of a government which has so dextrously ordered its measures, that these valuable additions of power and wealth are daily accumulated without attracting the notice of Europe; nay almost without its knowledge. Waving any investigation of the political effects which may spring from the rise or fall, or the encreasing grandeur of nations, I will here only observe, that the influence acquired by Russia, in the north-west quarter of Persia, has been accompanied with reciprocal benefits, and that were it

* Among the Hindoos at the Atashghah, was an old man, a native of Dehli, who had visited all the celebrated temples of northern and southern India, and whom I afterwards saw at Astracan.

wholly annexed to the Russian dominion, the body of people would reap essential advantages; their persons and property would derive a security, of which they have been long deprived, and by a subjection to the orders of a civilized, active government, they would necessarily become useful subjects and profitable members of society.

THE kingdom of Persia, since the period of the Afghan Invasion,* has presented an unvaried scene of warfare and distraction; where every species of a savage rapine has been exercised with boundless sway; and at this day, Persia may be said to exhibit a vast tomb, piled up with the victims of ambition, avarice, and revenge; It were difficult to say whether more of its people in the last sixty years, have fallen in the field, or by the hand of the executioner and assassin. For they have had a full occupation, especially in the latter part of the government of Nadir Shah, whose revenues were at length drained from the blood of his subject.

THE cruelties committed by this prince have been diffusely treated; all classes of men, even our boys at school, are conversant in the barbarous exploits of Khuli Khan; it may not however be superfluous to notice some facts, which seem to have largely contributed to fully the memory of Nadir, who at one period of his life, maintained no ill founded claims to heroic fame. At

* Which happened about the year 1720.

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the close of this prince's reign, his body and his mind indicated equal signs of disorder, which was supposed to have been caused or augmented by domestic treachery, and the effects of excessive fatigue.

CONSPIRACY and rebellion arose all around him, and he had no sooner quelled the insurrections of a province, than his departure was marked by the murder of the officers and successive revolts. Seeing his authority endlessly trampled on, and that partial punishment was inefficient to give it strength, he gave loose to a perhaps constitutional ferocity, which had been tempered by his understanding, but which these events inflamed to madness, and often instigated to the indiscriminate extirpation of a district. But what seemed most to embitter and disturb his mind, was the perfidy of his family; the defection of those from whom he had vainly expected aid and attachment. His favorite son and apparent successor, had been entrusted with the regency of Persia, during the expedition to Hindostan, and presuming on the distant occupations of his father, he had prepared measures, it is alledged, to ascend the throne.

THE increasing malady,* of Nadir, sharpened by public and domestic calamity, ultimately rendered him a monster of cruelty; and his rage extending usually to those, whose offices required

* An extreme costiveness.

an attendance on his person,* he was approached with a constant dread. Wearied out at length by the undeviating course of his tyranny and cruelties, which like a pestilence had thinned the land, some of the principal officers of the court, stimulated also, it is said, by one of his nephews, assassinated him in the month of April, 1747, while he was encamped in the northern quarter of Khorasan, not far distant from the place of his birth.

HAVING held out that side of Nadir's character which excites only disgust and horror, it were but simple justice to his memory, to notice those passages of his life which will place him in a light, where princes ever appear in the most grateful colours. On the event of his successes in India, he exempted his Persian dominion from all taxes, for the space of three years; and after discharging the military arrears, which amounted to four millions sterling, he gave the army a gratuity of six months pay, with a like sum to the civil servants of the camp.

AFTER the battle of Karnat, when Nadir had overthrown the empire of India, and possessed the person of the king, one of the Moghul omrah's represented to him, that among the Dehli troops were an hundred thousand horses fit for field service,

* It is said that the officers in waiting, instead of entering on the ordinary topics of a court, were used to make anxious and unfeigned enquiries into the state of the Shah's body, and ever expressed much joy, at an imperial evacuation, which they imagined would secure an existence for the day.

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and which his order would immediatly produce. Nadir Shah, in the language of a prince, observed that he granted to the Moghul army, an unreserved quarter, which should not be infringed; that the bread of an Asiatic soldier depends on his horse, which were he deprived of, himself and his family would be reduced to beggary; that it is repugnant to humanity to treat those with rigor, whom fortune has thrown into our power, and it was his determined will, that the Indian soldiers should not be in any degree insulted or molested.*

NADIR SHAH, in the prosperous periods of his life, held out an ample protection to merchants of every sect and nation, and zealously sought to establish a liberal commerce throughout Persia, which he saw possessed of various valuable commodities. When the mercantile property of Mr. Hanway, was plundered at Asterabad, that gentleman preferred his complaint in person to the shah, who directing an investigation into the account, issued an effectual order on the governor of the province for a full restitution of the effects or the amount.

In the vigorous attempts, which this prince made to introduce the European art of navigation and ship-building into his country; he evinced a genius rarely found in the mind of an Asiatic. It was his intention, by the assistance of John Elton, to erect fortified stations on the east side of the Caspian sea, that a stability

* Frazer's history of Nadir Shah.

might be given to his conquests in Khieva, and the Tartars checked in their depredations on the province of Asterabad. After Elton had, with vast labor, completed the building of a vessel, in which he encountered obstinate difficulties, as well from a jealousy of the Persians of his rising favor with the Shah as disgust at an irksome service, he was directed to examine the Tartar shores of the Caspian, and to make choice of an eligible situation for a settlement. But the coast, according to the report of Elton, being found destitute of good water, the design was relinquished.

NADIR SHAH, contrary to the general character of the Persians, who are impressed with a more persecuting spirit than any other Mahometan nation, gave a common toleration to the worship of the inhabitants, whether Christians, Hindoos, or Jews, and largely retrenched the power and wealth of the priests, who during the latter period of the Suffuee dynasty, had engrossed the chief direction of government. That Nadir might incapacitate their revenge for the death of the mollah Bafhi,* who had been executed for refusing assent to a plan of this prince for introducing the Sooni religion into Persia, and to accommodate other salutary purposes, he demanded an account of the vast revenues which had been assigned to the church; they informed him, according to the tenor of Frazer's relation of this event, that their property was applied to the uses, for which it had been allotted; in salaries for

* High-priest.

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the priests, in the maintenance of numerous colleges and mosques, in which prayers were incessantly offered up for the success of the arms of the prince, and of the prosperity of the Persian empire.

NADIR observed to them, that experience had manifested the inutility of their prayers, since for the space of fifty years past, the nation had been verging to decay, and ultimately had been reduced by invasions and rebellion to a state of ruin; when God's victorious instruments, pointing to his army, had come to its relief, and were now ready to sacrifice their lives to its defence and glory; that the wants of these poor priests, his soldiers, must be supplied, and he therefore determined that the greatest portion of the church lands should be appropriated to their use. The mandate being immediately carried into execution, produced a revenue equal to three million of sterling money. The priests, enraged at this assumption, exerted their utmost abilities in stirring up the army and the people against the shah; but the former being composed, in a large proportion, of the Sooni sect, ridiculed their situation, and the body of the inhabitants, when they considered that the edict would liberate them from a part of the general taxation, were not dissatisfied.

NADIR SHAH having accomplished this purpose, ordered the attendance of the chiefs of the people, and making a formal declaration of the measure which had been adopted, told them if they wanted priests, they must provide them at their own charge; that having himself little occasion for their services, he would not
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contribute to their maintenance. Such was Nadir Shah before calamity had harrassed his mind, and diseased his body. The actions of men, however amply gifted by nature or improved by knowledge, are strongly shaped by the surrounding events of human life. Let the man whom we have but now viewed with admiration, towering down the tide of fortune with a swelling sail, and marking his progress by conspicuous marks of glory and renown, be thrown on the rough sea of trouble, without a shelter to cover him from its fury ; or let him be stretched on the couch of sickness, helpless, and racked with pain, we shall speedily cease from wonder and applause, and with difficulty credit the identity of the object.

HAVING in detached pieces, and I fear with a wide deviation from order, described the most important events of the Persian empire, from the Afghan invasion to the death of Nadir Shah, I could have wished briefly to connect that epocha with the present period ; but no document has come to my knowledge, sufficiently authentic or clear, for the illustration of the whole of this interval.

PREVIOUSLY to the administration of Kareem Khan, many competitors for the throne of Persia came forward, and encountered a various transient fortune, until all the race of Nadir, and the Sofis' were extirpated, except Shah Rock, the chief of Muschid, a sketch of whose life, has been already noticed. Ka-
reem

reem Khan,* from a marauding horseman became the successful chieftain, and proclaiming himself the regent of the empire, during the minority of a descendant of the Sofi family, whom he pretended to have discovered, established his residence at Shiraz. It appears that Saadut Khan, the brother of the regent, took Bassorah † from the Turks after a year's siege; and during the Persian government of that place, Kareem Khan gave distinguished indulgencies to the English residents established there, whose factory and property, when the city fell into his possession, were fully secured to them. The administration of Kareem Khan, was involved in a series of hostilities against the Turks and Arabs, over whom, except the capture of Bassorah, he obtained but trivial advantages.

At the period of the regent's death, which happened about the year 1778, Saadut Khan was stationed with a small force at Bassorah, and solicitous of speedily reaching Shiraz, the theatre of action, he abandoned Bassorah, which again acknowledged the power of the Turks. When Saadut Khan approached Shiraz, he found the gates shut against him by a Zacchi Khan, a branch of his family, who seizing on the city, and the person of Kareem Khan's son, then a youth, an-

* He made no scruple of avowing, that in his youth he pursued the occupation of a robber, and that his foreteeth had been demolished by the kick of an ass, which he had stolen and was carrying off.

† This event happened in the year 1774.

nounced himself the ruler of southern Persia. The young man having evinced a disposition to favor the interests of his uncle; Zacchi Khan gave orders that he should be put to death. The sentence by a reverse in no rare practice at a Mahometan court, was executed on himself, and Saadut Khan was admitted into Shiraz, with a participation of the affairs of government. He soon formed a combination against his nephew, whom he ultimately deposed, on a charge of debauchery and a lavish expenditure of the public treasure.

DURING the administration of Kareem Khan, a body of troops had been sent to quell some insurrection, in a distant part of the country, under an Ali Morad, who returning successful, with an army disposed to promote his purposes, preferred a claim to the government; the issue of a civil war, prosecuted through a series of depredation, murder, and treachery, gave Ali Morad the possession of Shiraz, where he put to the sword, the whole family of Kareem Khan, with their adherents.* A Persian of Ispahan, speaking to me of the actions of Ali Morad, and extolling his military genius, said, that he possessed a scimeter of a large size and superior quality, on the blade of which were engraved the names of the twelve imaums, the directors of its edge, and the security of its victories.

* He was related to the family of Kareem Khan; it is said, that on this event, three hundred persons were massacred.

THE comment on the Mahometan's story, would in fact tell us, that whilst the sword of Ali Morad is thus patronised by his twelve saints, there is no service, however entangled by the ties of faith and honor, that he may not cut asunder with impunity, even with applause. Ali Morad, who has established the seat of his government at Ispahan, took Shiraz in 1778, or 1779, at which period, a gentleman of my acquaintance resided at Basforah, and has since communicated to me some tracts of the history of Kareem Khan, and of those chiefs who appeared in action after his death.

THIS gentleman whose veracity and discerning judgment may be confided in, draws a melancholy picture of the southern provinces of Persia. He says, that the intestine feuds and commotions gave a pretext for the perpetration of every crime disgraceful to human nature, and produced such daring acts of flagitiousness, that the people resembled demons rather than men. It was usual, he says, for one half of the inhabitants of a village, to keep watch at night, that they might not be murdered by the other, which if not equally vigilant became subject to a similar fate. But enough of this scene of blood, which degrades our race below the beasts of the field, and permit me in my desultory manner, to convey you again to the banks of the Caspian. It having been already noticed, that the dominion of this sea is vested without competition in the empire of Russia, which has also obtained a strong influence in some of the bordering provinces,

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provinces, it may not be foreign to rational enquiry, to examine the stages by which Russia has arrived at this accession of power.

IN the year 1722, Peter the Great was solicited by Thomas Khan, the son of the Shah Huseyn, to assist him in expelling the Afghans from Persia, who had driven his father from the throne, and continued to hold possession of an extensive portion of the kingdom; and to stimulate Russia to the grant of this aid, the Persian prince stipulated to cede in perpetuity the provinces of Ghilan and Shirwan. This proposal being acceded to, Peter, accompanied by the empress Katherine, embarked at Astracan with a large force, and proceeding along the west coast of the Caspian, landed at Agrechan, in the province of Mingrelia, about two hundred miles to the southward of the mouth of the Wolga; from thence he moved to the relief of Derbent, which had been besieged by the Afghans, and stationing a party of three hundred men in the castle, advanced a day's march into Persia; where he was met by the deputies of Baku, and Shahmachee who sought his protection against the Afghans, then making strenuous exertions to reduce these places.

PETER was preparing to undertake the service, when a Turkish envoy arrived in the camp, and represented, that his master having annexed Shahmachee to the Turkish dominion, was much displeased at the appearance of a Russian power in that quarter, and

and that unless the emperor withdrew his forces, he was directed to declare war against Russia.

PETER having lately felt the superior strength of the Turks in the unfortunate campaign of Pruth, and being then in a foreign country, destitute of the resources necessary for commencing hostilities against so powerful an enemy, he consented to a peaceable return to his own dominions. The Turkish envoy accompanied the army to the northern limits of Persia, where he remained until it had embarked for Astracan. The party which had been lodged in the fort of Derbent did not join the army in its retreat, but at the solicitation of the inhabitants continued in that station, until the Russians at a future period appeared on the Caspian, while those of Baku deprived of the hope of succour, received a body of Afghan troops into the town, and submitted to the government of Ispahan.

THE Russians had constructed a small fort on the river Millu Kenti, in the territory of the Lesghi Tartars, and garrisoned it with five hundred men, who after the departure of the grand army, were attacked by a large Afghan force and wholly destroyed. Peter, it is said, lost in this expedition, a third part of his troops, by sickness, fatigue, and onsets of the Lesghis; a loss the more mortifying, as it was then attended by a subversion of the sanguine project he had formed, of extending his conquest into the interior provinces of Persia.

It appears that this event was followed in a short time, by
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an ultimate and formal convention, between the courts of Constantinople and Peterburgh, which stipulated that Shahmachee, the territories of Armenia, Georgia, and Melitaner, should be held permanent appendages of the Port; and that Peter should be left at liberty to prosecute his designs on the provinces of Persia, bordering on the Caspian sea.

IN the latter end of the year 1722, the Persian chief of Ghilan deputed an agent to Astracan with powers to deliver up Reshd, the capital of the province, to a Russian garrison, should it be immediately dispatched to the relief of the city, then invested by the Afghans. The emperor assenting to the measure, dispatched by sea a thousand men to Ghilan, but on their arrival they were refused admittance by the inhabitants, who alarmed at the delay of the aid, and threatened with severe vengeance if they formed any connection with the Russian government, had entered into a negotiation with the Afghan officer for the surrender of the city. The Russian detachment formed an entrenchment on the sea-shore, where it remained until a reinforcement of four thousand men came from Astracan, with orders to force an entrance into Reshd; but this service was not found necessary, for on the arrival of the additional force, the gates of Reshd were immediately thrown open, and the whole province of Ghilan became subject to Russia.

THE officer who commanded the auxiliary troops, had in his passage down the Caspian, touched at Baku, where he was directed

directed to lodge a garrison, conformably to a previous requisition of the Persian governor, but the succour arriving too late, the place had submitted to an Afghan army. Peter anxious to acquire so valuable an acquisition, dispatched in the course of the following year, 1723, a strong naval armament from Astracan, which entering the port of Baku,* took the fort after a short bombardment. It is said that previously to this siege, the Persians had never seen a mortar, and that when the Russian bomb-ketch was warped into its station, they ridiculed the attempt of so small a vessel preparing to attack the fort; but the destruction of the buildings, and the carnage which ensued, speedily converted their contempt into astonishment and fear.

THESE leading lines of the progress and establishment of the Russian power on the Caspian sea, are largely borrowed from the memoirs of a captain Bruce, who served in Peter's army during the first Persian expedition, and who seems to have made his observations with an accurate judgment; he has certainly related them with simplicity and candor. His documents also corresponding with the information which I collected in Persia, this sketch is laid before you with the greater confidence. From the period at which Peter fixed his power in the provinces of Shirvan and Ghilan, to the year 1732, when Nadir de-

* This word, I am informed, is composed of the Persian words, Bad and ku, signifying a windy hill; it is certain that a strong wind generally prevails at that place.

posed.

posed Shah Thamas, and assumed the diadem of Persia, it is not seen that any material occurrences interposed to disturb the Russian territory, or commerce on the Caspian. But when this meteor of the east had blazed forth, and in its course consumed or dismayed the surrounding nations, the Russians then involved in domestic commotion and intrigue, were compelled to evacuate their Caspian dominion, with only the permission to hold a resident at the sea-port of Enzillee, for the management of the Ghilan silk-trade.*

FULTAH ALI KHAN, having within these late years, engaged in a desultory warfare with the Lefghi Tartars, sought the assistance of the Russians, who after repelling the incursions of the enemy, held for some time possession of the fort of Derbent. It has been again restored ; but the conditions are not known, though we may infer from the policy of the court of Petersburg, which is not in the habit of retrenching its limits, that the cause of withdrawing the garrison of Derbent, did not proceed from mere motives of liberality.

THAT your knowledge of this quarter of Persia may be more complete and satisfactory, I have been prompted to annex in this

* In the year 1746, an embassy was sent by the empress Elizabeth to Nadir Shah, a relation of which has been published by Mr. William Cooke, who accompanied it in the capacity of a surgeon ; and at that time it appears that except the Enzille factory, and a commercial residency at Derbent, the Russians did not possess any establishment in Persia.

place,

place, a survey of the Caspian sea made by Captain Bruce, in the year, 1723, by the order of Peter, after his return from Persia. The relation of this survey is deficient in the detail of bearings, and often of the soundings, nor is it known whether these remarks were ever recorded, or have been omitted by the publisher; but the information is much wanted, for except the Russians, other nations are still trivially acquainted with the coasts of the Caspian sea; especially with that which confines Tartary.

CAPTAIN BRUCE says, " we received orders to go all round
" the Caspian sea to survey and sound it, and lay down in a
" chart all the rivers, creeks, and bays, with all the different
" soundings; and for this service, had one of the strongest new
" built galleys of forty oars, carrying two eighteen pounders in
" her prow, twenty four swivels, and three hundred men, at-
" tended with four boats, two of eight oars, one of ten, and
" another of twelve, each boat carrying one swivel gun; and
" two sub-engineers were appointed for my assistants.

" THE 18th of April 1723, went down to the mouth of
" the Volga,* and next morning proceeding from thence east-
" ward, we passed in very shallow water along the coast, so
" very overgrown with weeds, that we were obliged to keep at
" five or six miles distant from the shore, in from ten to twelve

* Forty miles below the city of Astracan.

“ feet water; and all the way, even for eight days time, we
“ could find no place to land, even our smallest boats. We
“ saw two little islands in the way, but we could not come
“ at them for reeds, but we killed a great number of sea-fowl,
“ that have their nests in these islands, and had plenty of fish
“ and fowl, all the way. We sailed and rowed, as the wind
“ permitted, but came to an anchor every evening that no-
“ thing might escape our observation.

“ ON the 26th, we arrived at the river Jaick, the mouth of
“ which is one hundred fathoms broad, and eighteen feet deep;
“ we went to the town of Jaick, that stands about one mile
“ up the river, which is well fortified, and has a strong gar-
“ rison of Russians and Tartars,* to keep the Kalmuck and
“ Nagayan Tartars in awe, and to prevent them from attack-
“ ing each other, as they live in perpetual enmity.

“ THE Nagayans inhabit all the country from Astracan to
“ the Jaick, all along the sea coast, being two hundred and fifty
“ versts † in extent; and the Kalmucks possess that vast tract of
“ land from Saratoff to the great desert of Beriket, and that
“ tract to the south of the Jaick, all along the shore to the
“ river Yembo, which is 93 versts from this place; we stayed

* The inhabitants of that tract of Tartary, which has been completely subdued by Russia and now a stationary people.

† At the common calculation of two thirds of a mile to a verst, this distance is 170 miles.

“ only

“ only one day, at Jaick,* and provided ourselves with fresh meat
“ and water.

“ BEING informed by the governor of the place, that there
“ was a large gulf to the eastward, extending to the river Yembo,
“ but too shallow to admit our galley. I sent one of our
“ engineers to go round and survey it, and join us again on
“ the opposite point, for which we proceeded immediately; and
“ sailing south, we anchored on the 30th, between the island
“ of Kulala and the point of the main, in six fathoms water,
“ in view of the mountains of Kanayan, and from whence we
“ had a clean and deep shore. At this place begin the ter-
“ ritories of the Turkistan and Turcomanian Tartars. During our
“ stay, waiting the return of the engineer, we laid in plenty
“ of wood and water, and diverted ourselves with fowling and
“ fishing; we caught here a Beluga of upwards of six yards
“ long and thick in proportion, from the roe of which we
“ made excellent caviar, which lasted us above a month.

“ OUR engineer with the boats joined us, on the 10th
“ of May, who reported that in the survey of the bay, he

* The Russians send annually, two or three barks from Astracan to Uir Gunge, a Turcoman mart, situated on this river, above the town of Jaick, whence in return for European commodities, as steel, bar-iron, and remnants of broad-cloth, they import furs, and salt fish. The Jaick continues frozen from the month of December to the middle of March, during which period, the Uir Gunge trade ceases; nor do the Tartars, who are chiefly merchants of Bochara, and Samur Kund, reside at that place, after the departure of the Russian vessels. — GEORGE FORSTER.

“ found only from five to eight feet water ; that the whole
“ shore was so covered with reeds, that they could only land
“ at the mouth of the river Yembo, which was both broad
“ and deep. We left the island of Kulala, on the 11th, on
“ our way to the gulf of Iskander, where we arrived on the
“ 26th ; all along this coast there is a great depth of water, so
“ that we could land with our galley on any part of it.

“ A GREAT number of small rivers fall into the sea from
“ the mountains, but we could not learn their names although
“ I attempted to get information, by sending the twelve oared
“ boat with an officer and twenty four men, and an interpreter
“ to speak to the people on shore ; but they no sooner came
“ near enough, than the Tartars let fly a volley of arrows at
“ our people, who returned the salute with a discharge of their
“ musquetry at them ; and we fired one of our great guns from
“ the galley at them, which made them retire to the mountains
“ in good haste. They always appeared in great parties, on
“ horseback, and well armed, and we saw several of their hords
“ or camps at a great distance, from which they move at plea-
“ sure, and wander from place to place, for those Tartars have
“ no settled abode ; they continued to attend us every day in great
“ parties, to watch our motions, out of the reach of our guns,
“ and they disappeared entirely on our arrival in the gulf of Iskander, which is one hundred and eighty four versts from the
“ island of Kulala. In this gulf which is thirty versts in length.
“ and.

“ and eighteen broad, we found near the shore from five to six
“ fathoms water, with a clear ground and exceeding good an-
“ chorage.”

ON the 10th of April, the vessel in which I had embarked, sailed for Baku, and coasting the north-east head-land of the bay, anchored at Abshhorah,* a roadstead on a rocky shore, at which place most of the passengers came on board. The Armenians and Greeks had remained to celebrate the Easter-festival at Baku, where they have been permitted to erect a small chapel. The Persians of Shirwan, whether, from a frequent intercourse with the Greeks, who introduce much wealth into their country, or from a dread of the Russian power, shew a less dislike to the Christians than those of the eastern provinces.†

NOT being considered a staunch member of the faith, or thought to possess a sufficient sanctity of manners, I was not invited to assist at the conclusion of the Easter-fast. But, much against my will, I became a partaker of it on board the vessel. On the morning of Easter-sunday, long before break of day, the whole ship's crew, from the master to the cook, rushed tumultuously into the cabin, where I was asleep, and bellowed out their prayers to the figures of the virgin, and their patron, Saint:

* A Persian compound word, signifying salt water.

† A society of Persians, of the Sooni faith, is established at Shahmachee, and its neighbourhood, who are governed by a chief of their own tribe, a proprietor of certain districts held in Feu of Futtah Ali Khan.

Nicholas,

Nicholas, for the speedy deliverance of Christ from the grave, which as soon as was supposed to be effected, they saluted each other by a kiss, saying "Christ has risen."

DURING the fervor of this occupation, I was wholly overlooked and trampled on. They did not however neglect me in the more substantial part of the festival; for though in bed, they placed near me a large pudding stuffed with meat, which they earnestly desired me to eat; observing that as I must have incurred a severe restraint during their rigorous lent, it was now necessary to regale and be merry. They themselves implicitly conformed to the advice; and from the extraordinary quantity of flesh meat which they hastily devoured, during these holidays, it seemed that they eat as much for the purpose of compensating lost time, as the gratification of appetite.

On the 13th of April, every person and every parcel that could possibly find a place being embarked, the vessel sailed, passing between a small island of rocks and the main. On looking around, I was amazed at the crowd of passengers, and the lumber that was scattered on the deck and suspended from the sides. I could not have thought it possible for such a space to contain so much matter. The lodging allotted to me, admitted scantily of my length, and of lying only on one side; but I was fortunate in an interior station, which saved me from being trod on by the other passengers, over whom lay my common path. When placed at the same board with a Russian, an Armenian,
a Greek,

a Greek, and a Persian, I used to investigate with a pleasing curiosity the cause which had linked in the bonds of society, five persons of different nations, manners, and prejudices. The union was manifestly formed by self-interest, which when refined by a knowledge of the world, induces men to seek profit and pleasure through various channels, and in the pursuit, which is eager and vigorous, many are prompted to break down the strongest fences which education or superstition can plant.

ON the evening of the 20th, having seen two fishing-boats which marked the vicinity of the Astracan shore, our bark came to an anchor in three fathom water, but no land in sight. In the evening the wind began to blow with violence, and raised the sea; which in the Caspian is soon agitated, having a short irregular motion and breaking with great force. I had not been long in bed, when the Greek gentleman expressed an apprehension that the vessel was touching the ground, which was soon verified by a rough shock of the rudder. A scene of confusion, marked with various tokens of distress now ensued. Some were bawling out in the Russian, the Armenian and in the Persian language, while others were lamenting their fate in Greek and Turkish.

HAD I not been so essentially interested in the event, which bore a very unpromising aspect, the diversity of modes adapted in expressing a sense of this disaster, would have afforded matter of curious notice. Every man was imploring the divine interposition

terposition in his own manner and language ; but my attention was chiefly attracted by a Persian who had taken refuge in the cabin, a place he imagined of the more safety, from the master having taken his station there. In a piteous tone, he begged that I would accommodate him with a pillow, that he might compose himself, and await his last hour with resignation ; amidst his ejaculations which were loud and fervent, he did not once mention the name of Mahomet. The whole force of his prayers were levelled at Ali, on whom he bestowed every title that could denote sanctity, or military prowess ; he called on him by the name of the Friend of God, the Lord of the faithful and the Brandisher of the invincible sword, to look down on his servant, and shield him from the impending evil ; thinking also to obtain the more grace with the father, he would occasionally launch out into the praises of his two sons.*

THE bales of silk, with which the cabin was filled to half its height, being removed forward, the vessel which struck only at the stern, was for a time relieved ; but the wind and sea increasing, our danger became imminent. I proposed to the Greek, to throw over some part of the cargoe, as the best mode of saving the rest, as also our lives ; and he was disposed to try the expedient, had he not been obstructed by the passengers, who bitterly inveighed against the proposal, and the adventuring Fe-

* Huffin and Huffleyn.

ringhee,

ringhee its author, who having nothing to lose, they said, was little interested in the issue. Yet I can with truth aver, that in no situation of difficulty in which I have been occasionally involved, did I ever feel a stronger reluctance of quitting the "warm precincts of day;" I could not with adequate fortitude reconcile the idea of being lost on a shore, which I had so long fought with labor and anxiety, and which I had approached only to meet destruction. But that I might not be taken wholly unprepared I secured about my person the journal of my route, the only article of property which was in the least valuable.

HAVING obtained the Greek's consent to cut away some heavy lumber which hung from that quarter, and greatly contributed to augment the force of the vessel's striking the ground; I began to throw into the sea empty casks, tubs, and baskets of fruit; and was proceeding briskly in the work, when I was driven from my post by a strong party of the proprietors.

ON the 22d, before noon, the wind having abated a little, the crew were enabled, though with with difficulty, to hoist out the boat, which was out of all proportion, large and heavy; nor did the vessel ever touch the ground after being disburthened of this mass.

ON the 23d, at anchor, the wind moderate but contrary. The vessel remained nearly in the same place until the 28th, when many fishing boats came in sight; not less I imagine, than one hundred; and some of them visiting us, we purchased

at the rate of a shilling a piece excellent sturgeon, the roes of which, stripped of the filaments and sprinkled with salt, without any other preparation, is the common food of the Russians, and of which I have eat heartily. This when dried, is called in Europe, the caviar, and produces a profitable traffick to the city of Astracan. The sturgeon fishery is chiefly conducted by Kalmuck Tartars, who find a ready sale for their fish, at numerous factories, established by the Russians, on the lower parts of the Volga, for the purpose of salting sturgeon and preparing the caviar.

HAVING understood that the Kalmucks were a migrating people, consisting wholly of shepherds and soldiers, who derived a subsistence from their broods of cattle, and marauding expeditions, I was surprized at seeing them occupied in a marine profession. But many thousands of the Kalmuck race are scattered about the northern coast of the Caspian, where in small narrow boats, worked by four or five persons, they are engaged in the sturgeon fishery during the summer months. They often continue many successive days at sea, the water* of which they drink. And they eat in its raw state part of the produce of their labors.

THERE is not perhaps on the face of the earth, a human creature

* At the distance of fifteen and twenty leagues from the north shore of the Caspian, the water freshened by the large rivers flowing into it from that quarter, may be drunk without prejudice; it being only brackish, when the wind blows strong from the southward.

who

who lives on coarser fare, or to a civilized people more disgusting than a Kalmuck Tartar; not even the savages of southern Africa. Putrid fish raw, or the flesh of carrion, horses, oxen, and camels, is the ordinary food of Kalmucks; and they are more active and less susceptible of the inclemency of weather, than any race of men I have ever seen. The features of a Kalmuck, though coarser, bear a striking resemblance to those of a Chinese; the upper part of his nose is scarcely seen to project from the face, and its extremity is furnished with widely dilated nostrils.

BEING anxious to leave the ship whose provisions were nearly consumed, and which from the crowd and filth of the passengers, had become very offensive, I hired in conjunction with the Greek gentleman, a Kalmuck boat to go to Astracan. But before I quit the subject of the vessel, I must mention to you that we brought from Baku five Hindoos; two of them were merchants of Moultan and three were mendicants, a father, his son, and a Sunyassée.* The last was a hale, spirited young man, who impelled by an equal alertness in mind and body, blended also with a strong tincture of fanaticism, was making, it may be termed, the tour of the world; for he did not seem to hold it a matter of much concern whither his course was directed, provided he was in motion

* The name of a religious sect of Hindoos, chiefly of the Bramin tribe.

THE Hindoos at Baku had supplied his little wants, and recommended him to their agents in Russia, whence he said, he would like to proceed with me to England. The Moultañce Hindoos were going to Astracan on a commercial adventure merely, and would not have gone a mile out of the road to have served God or man. When I accused the Hindoos of polluting themselves by drinking the cask-water, and preparing victuals in the ship-kitchen, they observed, that they had already become impure by crossing the forbidden river,* beyond which all discrimination of tribes ceased. Though spirituous liquors are prohibited to the Hindoos, it does not appear that the use of bang, an intoxicating weed which resembles the hemp in Europe, and is prepared either for smoking or a draught, is considered even by the most rigid, a breach of the law, for they drink it without reserve, and often to excess.

IN the evening of the 28th of April, four of us embarked in one of the Kalmuck boats, rowed by four stout men, who directing a course for the Astracan channel, proceeded at the rate of five miles an hour, over very smooth water; we reached before night a small inhabited island, about twenty five miles distant from the vessel; and as the Kalmucks were fatigued with hard work, it was agreed to go on shore for a few hours to give them a respite. I landed with joy on the territory of

* The Attoc. — *N. B.* The verses of the Emperor to the Hindoo Rajah.

Russia;

Russia ; and you who have now perused the story of my long, laborious journey, will see reason, without the aid of figurative enlargement, for the pleasure I felt. The inhabitants of the island, who were agents of the sturgeon fishery, received us with cordiality, and when apprized of the Greek gentleman's rank in the service, treated him with much respect. In a wooden house, cleanly furnished in the European manner, which to me was a rare object, we were entertained with a dish of sturgeon in broth, good bread, and pure water. Excuse the sensuality of my description ; but I must give way to an impulse of joy at the remembrance of that delicious meal. It was personally served up by our host, who agreeably, to the ancient custom of Russia waited at table, and performed all the offices of assiduous hospitality.

AT the conclusion of the repast, in which the Kalmucks had subsequently shared, we proceeded on our journey, and leaving John's Island* on the left, the lights of which were seen, entered the Astracan branch of the Volga. About midnight the boatmen became so much harrassed by the labor of the oar, at which they probably had been employed all the preceding day, that it was found necessary to refresh them with a little sleep, of which I was also in great need. Having only a space to sit

* Called also Chattiree Bougarree. It stands at the mouth of the Astracan channel, and is furnished with a light-house.

on with my legs bent under me, the position had long been very painful, and no sooner did the boat touch ground, than leaping out, I spread my cloak on the ground, and slept soundly three hours. At day light we commenced our journey, which led among numerous low islands, covered with reeds, and about eight o'clock in the morning, arrived at a station called the Brand Wacht, about twelve miles within John's Island, where a marine guard is posted for the protection of the custom house, and enforcing the occasional observance of quarantine. It was fortunate that I had procured a written testimony of my situation from the captain of the frigate at Baku, without which I must have awaited the orders of the Astracan government. We discharged the Kalmucks at the Brand Wacht, and hired an eight oared boat, the property of Turkoman Tartars,* who were clothed like Russian seamen, and very expert in the management of the oar.

THE Turkoman subjects of Russia, are an industrious quiet people, and have become useful subjects to the state. Many of them serve in the navy and army, where they are received without objection to their religious tenets, which are less intemperate, than those of any other of the western Mahometans. Few villages are seen on the borders of this branch of the Volga ; the land, nearly

* The descendants of those Tartars, who were in possession of Astracan, when it was subdued in 1552, by the Czar, Ivan Basilivitz, surnamed the Tyrant.

level with the water, is thickly covered with reeds, affording a commodious shelter to numerous flocks of wild geese, which seem to have resorted thither from all quarters of the globe ; nor could they have chosen a fitter place ; it is equally secluded from the haunts of men and animals, defended by a strong cover, and abundantly supplied with fresh water.

WHEN we arrived in sight of the great church of Astracan, which with the other spires and high buildings of that city, present a beautiful vista to a long reach of the Volga, my Greek friend arose, and making the sign of the cross on his body, offered up, with an unaffected decent devotion, a prayer of thanksgiving for his safe return to his country ; and I trust that I shall not incur your censure for having adopted his manner and example. Forms are the least important part of our duty, and the observance of this, I held a necessary respect for the religious worship of a man who had rendered me essential offices of humanity.

ON our arrival at his house, which stands on the bank of the river, I requested leave to retire to a separate apartment until my person should undergo a purification, which had now become urgently necessary, and some European apparel provided. This warm hearted Greek would not listen to the proposal, but seizing my arm, forcibly dragged me into the room, where his wife, a pretty young woman, and some gentlemen of the place were assembled. He introduced me to the company, by the name of Signor Georgio, and in a few words, recounted to them the heads of my story.

Though

Though I was clad in an ordinary Persian dress, had a rough beard, and a very weather-beaten face, not one of them seemed to notice the uncouth appearance, but by kind and polite congratulations, took every occasion to dispel my evident embarrassment. I soon went to bed, where I must have been overpowered by a strong sleep; for the Greek told me in the morning, that he had made repeated attempts to awaken me, fearing that his house would have been consumed by a fire, which had broke out with violence in the neighbourhood. My host insisted on furnishing me with clothing out of his own wardrobe, observing that my short stay at Astracan, would not admit of a new equipment; an Armenian gentleman, who came to welcome the Greek's arrival, proposed to introduce me to the officer, commanding the Caspian Squadron, and to one of my countrymen, a lieutenant in the Russian navy.

THE commodore,* who spoke the English language very intelligibly, received us with much politeness, and sent a servant to inform Mr. Long, the English gentleman, of my arrival. The connection which I formed with my countryman, who was of a friendly and chearful disposition, rendered my stay at Astracan, very pleasant; and having little other occupation there, than that of a spectator, you will necessarily suppose, that I ought to give some description of this quarter of Russia; but

* Peter Hannicoff, a knight of one of the military orders.

the

the subject has already been so amply investigated by writers of almost every European nation, that had even my residence enabled me to undertake the discussion, little remains to be described.

It is seen in the history of Russia, that the Czar, Ivan Basilovitz, having in the year 1552, conquered the Tartar kingdom of Casan, he turned his arms against the Nogay Tartars of Astracan, and subdued their country, the capital of which he took by assault, and strengthened it by a new fortification in the Asiatic manner. The space which the territory of Astracan occupies on the face of the globe is so peculiarly marked, that it enforces the notice of every observer. On the east and south-east, it is skirted by a wild extensive desert, reaching to the habitable quarters of Transoxonian Tartary; on the south, it hath the barren shores of the Caspian sea; on the south-east, a desert of three or four hundred miles, extending to Circassia, which is only supplied at two places with fresh water; and on the west, another spacious waste divides it from the Black sea:

On these dreary plains, little other vestige of humanity is seen than thinly scattered hords of roving Tartars, whose rude and savage life but increases the horror of the scene; and, as if the kinder powers of nature had been destroyed, or arrested by some malignant influence, not a shrub or blade of grass is to be seen on many of these plains that is not tainted with noxious qualities. To the north and north-east, the province of Astracan is bounded by Russia Proper, and Cazan, on which

side also a wide tract of barren land is interposed. The island on which Astracan stands, as well as its dependant territory, produces no grain, and though so deeply surrounded by deserts, no quarter of the Russian dominions is more abundantly supplied with this provision. The country to the westward and southward of Astracan, produces a natural salt of an excellent quality for domestic uses, which is transported from thence to remote parts of the empire, chiefly by water carriage.* The flourishing state of the province of Astracan, hath also been largely promoted by its fisheries on the Volga and the Caspian sea, where the fish are procured and salted at a cheap rate, and the sale is very extensive.

A BRISK traffick has long subsisted between Astracan and the Tartars of Bochara and Khieva, who in return for their curious furs and lambskins, purchase a variety of European commodities. Yet the natural advantages of Astracan would yield but a small portion of their benefits, did not the Volga furnish the means of a secure and commodious conveyance. This river, which has a course of not less than two thousand British miles, takes its rise from a lake of the same name, in the province of No-

* Saltpetre, though not in large quantities, is found in the vicinity of Astracan, which, according to Cooke, is taken out of the earth, and macerated for some time in water; then they draw it off, and by adding foot and some quick lime, evaporate the water, and make as good saltpetre as can be made any where. See tracts of Mr. William Cooke, Surgeon.

vogorod,

vogorod, latitude 57, longitude east 51, and after skirting numerous cities and mercantile towns, falls into the Caspian sea, forty miles below Astracan. In this course, it receives many rivers and lesser streams, which spreading to the eastward, form a navigable communication throughout that wide space of country, lying between Siberia and the Dnieper.

By the Occa which receives the river Mosca and joins the Volga, at the city of Nijnio Novogorod, large boats pass from Astracan to the old capital; and by a canal which unites the Volga with the Msta, a river ultimately flowing into the Ladoga lake, the source of the Neva, an inland navigation is completely opened between the Caspian and the Baltic seas. From the level face of the country, the current * of the Volga has little force, and will admit of boats being warped against it, at the rate of three miles an hour.† The city of Astracan is supposed to contain about eighty thousand inhabitants. Exclusive of the Russians, there is a numerous colony of Nagayan Tartars, (the ancient people of the country), many Greeks, Armenians, and Circassians, some itinerant Persians, and a small society of Hindoos.

IN the life of Timur Beg, translated from the Persian by M. Petit de la Croix, Astracan is denominated Hadji Terkan, one of the principal cities of the kingdom of Kapchac, which Ti-

* It runs about one and a half, and two miles per hour.

† For a description of the manner in which these boats are worked, see Hanway's and Bruce's travels.

mur, when he penetrated into that quarter of Tartary, took and destroyed. This prince detached also a part of his army further up the Volga to Serai,* the capital of Kapchac, which was plundered and reduced to ashes. In the history of Timur, I find a passage relative to Russia, which for the curious information it conveys, deserves a distinct notice.

TIMUR, in the pursuit of a vanquished enemy, arrived at the river Dnieper, which leaving on the left, he crossed the Don, and entered the dominion of Russia. The author, in the English translation, says, “ our soldiers pursued him as far as
 “ Corason, the present Koresh, a town of Grand Russia, which
 “ they entirely pillaged. They over-run all the great kingdom of
 “ Muscovy and Ourous-dgic, or Little Russia, where they took
 “ prodigious droves of cattle, and abundance of women, and girls
 “ of all ages, and of an extraordinary beauty and shape. Then
 “ Timur went in person to the city of Moscow, the capital of
 “ Grand Russia, which his soldiers plundered, as they had done
 “ all the neighbouring places dependant on it, defeating and cut-
 “ ting in pieces the governors and princes. The Russians and
 “ Muscovites never beheld their kingdom in so bad a condition ;
 “ their plains being covered with dead bodies. The army en-
 “ riched themselves with whatever they could find in this vast
 “ country, as ingots of gold, silver blades, great quantities of

* An Asiatic word signifying residence.

“ antioch’;

“ antioch ; very much esteemed cloth, wove in Russia with a great
“ deal of skill and nicety ; vast numbers of fables, black as jet,
“ and ermins, with which every person in the army was suf-
“ ficiently furnished, both for his own and his childrens lives ;
“ as likewise skins of vacash, grey and white, spotted like tygers
“ skins. They also brought away many skins of grey and red
“ foxes, and an infinite number of young colts which had not
“ been shod. It would be tedious to give a detail of all the
“ booty they obtained in this great country.”

WHAT an immense scope did the conquests and invasions of Timur embrace. His arms were seen victorious on the Ganges, and his banners flying on the confines of the Baltic sea ! yet, view the scene of the present day, and you will behold the great empire, which he founded, mouldered into dust. Russia which had felt the force of the destructive Tartar, and was but yesterday drawn out of barbarism and reduced into form, hath already taken ample vengeance* for the disgrace she then suffered ; and in the probable revolution of events, promises to complete the work which has been so successfully begun.

DURING the flourishing state of Persia and Turkey, when these powers were enabled to restrain the Russian empire within its proper limit, Astracan was considered an important frontier. But

* The imperial family of Turkey is of the Tartar race.

since

since the decay of the Persian monarchy, the independance of Georgia, and the cession of the Crimea by the Turks, who in this surrender have proclaimed their weakness and pusillanimity to the world; and since the Tartars who were scattered over the eastern and western sides of the Volga, have been either compelled to desert their haunts, or submit to the Russian power, this province no longer forms the boundary of the empire. The government of Astracan, is now directed by a system wholly civil and commercial, and the garrison consists of about fifteen hundred men, who have more the appearance of militia than regular troops, and are conspicuously deficient in military order.

In this city, which occupies a mediate situation between Asia and Europe, there is perhaps a more diversified assemblage of nations, than on any other spot on the globe, and a more liberal display of toleration; you see the Greek, Lutheran, and Roman churches, mingled with the Mahometan mosque and Hindoo pagoda, and the different sectaries united by the bonds of a common social compact. The largest portion of the industry and adventure which supports the commerce of Astracan, is contributed by the Armenians, who are the proprietors of most of the Caspian vessels, and the chief conductors of the Persian trade. By their pliant manners but more by their wealth, which has supplied the means of securing the favor of government, the Armenians have acquired a distinguished influence

fluence and respect in this province. Where they exhibit a cumbrous luxury and splendor; and generally adopt the Russian manners. It evidently appears that the extensive encouragement given to these people, has conduced to introduce much wealth and commercial emulation into this part of the empire,

THE Hindoos also enjoy at Astracan very fair indulgence; nor could they in the most celebrated places of worship in India, perform their rites with more freedom. They are not stationary residents, nor do they keep any of their females in this city; but after accumulating a certain property they return to India, and are succeeded by other adventurers. Being a mercantile sect of their nation, and occupied in a desultory species of traffick, they have neglected to preserve any record of their first settlement, and subsequent progress in this quarter of Russia; nor is the fact ascertained with any accuracy by the natives of Astracan. In the karavansera allotted to them, which is commodious and detached, they make their ablutions and offer up their prayers, without attracting even the curiosity of the Christians; and they do not fail to gratefully contrast so temperate a conduct with that of Persia, where their religion, persons, and property, are equally exposed to the attacks of bigotry and avarice.

MANIFEST proofs were daily presented to me of the benefits conferred by the Volga on Astracan, and the southern quarters of the province, which though productive of no grain, and but
little

little pasturage, are amply supplied with provisions,* from the vicinity of Czaritsin, and even from Casan, though at the distance of one thousand miles. A grand testimony of the uses of this river, which is formed on common notice, is seen in the immediate construction of the city of Astracan, which, though not a tree grows in the province, except in gardens, is chiefly composed of wooden houses; numerous vessels are also built in the docks, and vast quantity of fuel is consumed by the inhabitants. All this timber is floated down the Volga, or imported in boats from the upper countries.

DURING my short stay at Astracan, I daily visited the marine yard, where I received much pleasure in viewing the progress which the Russians have made in all the degrees of naval architecture, since the time of Peter. The squadron now in force for the protection of the Caspian trade, and awing such of the bordering states as may be hostile to the designs of Russia, consists of five frigates† of twenty guns, one bomb-ketch and some tenders. Out of this amount, two frigates with the bomb-ketch are at Astracan, one at sea, and two on the passage from Casan. These vessels on account of the shallows at the mouth of the Volga, are constructed on a broad bottom, and draw only eight or nine feet water. An extensive marine yard

* Wheat bread, bore the price of one and a half farthing per pound, and beef of three farthings per pound.

† Six pounders.

has

has been within this late years established at Casan, where the abundant produce of oak timber, and other necessary materials, with the advantage of the river, have pointed out the conveniency of building the hulls of the vessels destined for the Caspian service. The Russians have introduced into their navy, many of the Dutch principles and regulations, which it is probable were adopted by Peter, subsequently to his residence in Holland, and by the naval officers which he invited from that Country. Some French ordinances relative to the rank and duty of officers, are also introduced, but it is not seen that their system has received any improvement from the marine of England.

THE Russian seamen, in addition to their diet and clothes, receive nine rubles* per annum, and as an inducement to prefer the naval service, they are supplied with a daily ration of flesh provisions; an allowance not granted to the army, though it is also furnished with diet† by the government. The Caspian Squadron at this period, acts ultimately under the orders of General Potemkin, whose army is stationed between the Caspian and the Black-sea. A part of this force has been lately detached into Georgia, the territory of Prince Heraclius,‡ a Christian chief, who in the last war between the Russians and the Turks, withdrew his allegiance from the Porte.

* A ruble amounts to about four shillings and three pence.

† Consisting of rye-bread, and salt only.

‡ He is denominated by the Asiatics, Heracly Khan.

SINCE the accession of the Crimea to Russia, the empress hath held out an avowed protection to Heraclius, who is now declared an independant prince ; and it appears that an officer of the court has been deputed to present him, in the imperial name, with a crown of gold, and the title of King of Georgia.* By this act of policy, which involved no danger or charge, hath the aspiring monarch of Russia, secured an useful ally, and established on the side of Georgia a substantial barrier against the natural enemies of her state. The other potentates of Europe, are in the usage of presenting their portraits, some curious animal, perhaps, or patents of nobility to their allies and favorites ; but a commanding fortune has enabled Catharine to bestow on her friends,† crowns and kingdoms. It may be said that Russia holds the supremacy of Georgia, and it is probable that at the death of the prince, a period which his advanced age places at no remote distance, the succession will be arranged in the manner most accordant with the policy of the court of Peterburgh.

AN occurrence befel me on the day previously to my departure from Astracan, which from a curious fact which it disclosed, may not be unworthy of your notice. Whilst I was looking at some passages of Hanway's travels in Mr. Long's apart-

* An ancient name, I understand, of Georgia.

† Count Poniatoufsky and Heraclius.

ment,

ment, a Russian gentleman came in, who perceiving that I was a foreigner, and from some broken words which I spoke, probably an Englishman, he addressed me with fluency in my own language; the book in my hand, which he observed, belonged to him, had great merit, and that he was himself well acquainted with many of the events recorded in it. Without ceremony he entered into a general discussion of the history of Persia, from the period of Hanway's conclusion to the present time, and treated the subject with much apparent accuracy.

THIS gentleman of the name of Marcke, had held the rank of Brigadier General, in the Russian service, and for some years directed the affairs of the Russian factory at Ghilan. But, on a charge of oppressing some Armenian merchants, he was dismissed from the service, and mulcted in the whole amount of his property. Mr. Marcke concluded his observations on Persia, by noticing, that the Captain Elton, who has been already mentioned, married an Armenian woman in Ghilan, and his daughter, the issue of that marriage, was now residing at Astracan. Intelligence, he said, had been received, that an estate or legacy had been bequeathed to Elton, during his supposed residence in Persia, and that if such property had really devolved on him, no one possessed a fairer claim to it than his daughter, who could ascertain the legitimacy of her birth, and who now a widow, encumbered with many children, was reduced to extreme

indigence.* It would be an act of charity, he added, to make an enquiry on my arrival in England into the truth of this intelligence, and endeavour to obtain some provision for a distressed family. Noticing in me a more than ordinary concern for the misfortunes of this woman and the fate of her father, he said, that if I saw her, I should be enabled to represent her situation with more corroborating facts. He objected to the proposal of my going to her house, apprehending from her manner of life, that the visit would be incommodious; but went himself and conducted her to Mr. Long's lodgings. She was a little woman about forty years of age, had from some accident become lame, and was accompanied by a son.

SOME years ago she had been induced to undertake a journey to Peterburgh, for the purpose of establishing her claims, and had reached Moscow; where some Armenians residing in that city, diverted her intention, which they represented as fruitless without greater aids than she possessed. The honest warmth with which Mr. Marcke espoused the cause of this forlorn widow, attracted me forcibly to him; and the pleasure which I suppose he received at observing the like disposition in a stranger, whom he was about to part with, probably for ever, incited him

* General Marcke says that in a short time after the death of Nadir Shah, Elton was either assassinated, by the hand, or the order of the father of the present chief of Ghilan.

to communicate many events of his life, which were related in a manner peculiarly animated and pathetic.

It appeared that he was a native of the Ukraine, and had been early employed as secretary to the Russian embassy, at the court of London, where, and at Petersburg, he formed many connections with our nation, to one of whom, I think he said, his sister had been married. He had served likewise in the corps of engineers, where I have since understood, he acquired the reputation of an officer of ability, and formed a friendship with the present governor of Astracan, who now renders him many offices of kindness. After occupying various stations in the service of Russia, he was appointed to the direction of the Ghilan factory, whence he had been removed at the instigation of the Armenians, who, he said, persecuted him with uncommon marks of malignity. His property was confiscated, and he received the sentence of banishment to Siberia, which was afterwards commuted to a close residence at Astracan. His deportment evinced an unaffected resignation to the lot which had befallen him; nor was it devoid of a manly exertion of spirit. In a tone of simple humility, but strengthened by an eye which impressed irresistible conviction, he affirmed, that in the condition which fortune had placed him, he experienced a large portion of content. He had given a wide scope, he said, to the impulse of ambition, and had gratified it by the aid of instruments he now beheld with horror and disgust; but adversity had at once extinguished every
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tumultuous affection, and endowed him with fortitude, and the sober enjoyment of reason.

HAVING made the necessary preparation for my journey, and obtained a passport, with an order for post horses,* I was ready on the 10th of May, to leave Astracan; and here it is incumbent on me, to express cordial thanks for the hospitality and kindness shewn me by the gentlemen of that city, especially to the honest Greek, Ivan Andreitch, whose treatment of me, from the day he took me up at Baku, to my departure from Astracan, was undeviatingly generous and affectionate. Nor must I omit the good offices of Mr. Hannicoff, who expeditiously procured the necessary papers from the public office, and gave me letters of introduction to Count Zchernichoff, the marine minister, and to Admiral Greig.

MR. LONG'S goodness to me was manifold; it anticipated all my wants, and indeed, by an anxious attention to my welfare, increased them; whether in furnishing a store of provisions, as there are few houses of fare on the road, or in fortifying my travelling conveyance,† against the casualties of a long journey. The journey from Astracan to Petersburg, having
been

* This instrument is termed *Pedrozchna*, without which no persons can be supplied with post horses, the hire of which is fixed by government, at the rate of two copeaks, about a penny, for each horse, per verst.

† A four wheeled carriage, called in the Russian language, a *Kibitka*. It is fixed on the axles without springs, and is six feet long, and four feet in breadth, of the form
of a

been quickly run over, and without a knowledge of the language, you will necessarily suppose that my observations were limited and trivial. To qualify some of the difficulties which lay in my way, Mr. Hannicoff furnished me with a list of the stages and their distances, which prevented the common imposition of post houses, and afforded me amusement.

ON the 12th of May, at midnight, having travelled two hundred and fifty-eight miles, and two thirds, I arrived at Czaritsin, where I was detained until the next morning, that my passport might be examined by the commandant. This gentleman perceiving the embarrassment which arose from my want of the Russian language, entered with much good-nature into the story of my little requisitions, and speedily accommodated them; though at the time he was much oppressed by sickness.

THE country to Czaritsin is level and thinly inhabited; yet its abundant herbage, shewed the soil to be of a good quality. The garrison of this fortress, which is independant of Astracan, consists of three or four thousand men. Since the frontier of Russia has been extended on the south-west, by the complete subjection of the Cuban Tartars, and the acquisition of the Crimea, this station is not considered of much military account.

of a cradle; about a third part of it, towards the head, is covered with a tilt of painted canvas, from the fore edge of which to the foot, a leather covering is occasionally fixed in a sloping direction, as a shelter against the weather; this machine is supplied with a bedding, and contains also, the requisite baggage of the passenger.

FROM

FROM the western bank of the Volga, and near the fort of Czaritfin, a chain of redoubts of about forty miles in length, strengthened by an intrenchment, extends to the river Don ; but which, from the like cause that has diminished the importance of Czaritfin, is now of little utility, and has been evacuated. It is said, that the empress occasionally expresses a disposition to open a channel between the two rivers ; a design which had been undertaken by the great Peter, but frustrated by the unsuccessful issue of the Turkish war, as well as certain difficulties which attended the operation.*

THE ground occupying this space, which I examined, is chiefly composed of gravel or rock, and apparently little higher than the level of the rivers. By opening this passage, an inland navigation would be effected from the Black-sea to Siberia, by the medium of the river Kamah, which rises in that province, and falls into the Volga, about forty miles below the city of Cazan ; and the Russian marine, now established on the Black-sea,† which has long been a favourite object at Petersburg, would receive from this communication a supply of commodities, the most essential to its support ; as timber, iron, cordage and canvas. Such a passage into the Euxine and Mediteranean seas, from a country yielding

* The soil was found in many places to be mixed with a large portion of rock ; and the officer, an Englishman, who conducted the plan, was cut off by banditti.

† The port of Kerfon.

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a produce so various and valuable, may create a revolution equally important in the commercial and political world; and enable Russia, now indebted to foreign nations for the maintenance of her trade, to found within herself a mart, whose happy situation is empowered to attract to a common centre the commerce of Asia and Europe.

THE Day on which I left Czaritsin, the road led along the southern bank of the Don, which was wholly uninhabited; its current seemed to run at the rate of one mile and a half an hour, and the breadth to be about three hundred yards. No occurrence of any moment befel me from Czaritsin to Choperskoy Krepost,* a distance of two hundred and thirty-five miles and a quarter; unless it be noted, that so far from encountering any impediment, I received a general civility and assistance. When you advert to the predicament in which I stood, a stranger, alone, and unacquainted with the speech of the country, you must yield a due portion of praise to the excellency of the government, and the disposition of the people.

FROM Czaritsin extends a tract of uncultivated land, of more than one hundred miles, in the direction of the road, on which no other habitation appears than huts, for the accommodation of those who keep the post horses; but it shews no other testimony of

Krepost in the Russian language, signifies a fort.

a desert than the want of inhabitants; for the soil bears an exuberant herbage, and is not deficient in water.

AT the distance of a few miles from Choperskoy, the driver* of the carriage alarmed me by a report of the hinder axle being shattered; an accident which gave me an opportunity of observing the dexterity of a Russian carpenter in the use of the axe. Without the help of any other tool, except a narrow chisel, to cut a space in the centre of it for receiving an iron bar which supports the axle, and to pierce holes for the linch pins, he reduced in two hours a piece of gross timber to the requisite form, and his charge was one shilling.

TRAVELLING one hundred and twenty miles from this place, I arrived at the city of Tanboff, not large, but populous, and generally well built, the residence of a governor, who examined and put his signature to my passport. The country was level, bearing little wood, and from Astracan to this place I had not seen a stone on its surface. A heavy rain fell during the night of my departure from Tanboff, which caused an overflowing of the adjacent brooks, in one of which the carriage sunk so deep, that the horses with every effort could not drag it, though strenuously assisted by the driver. This trivial event should not have been intruded on you, did it not tend to delineate the character of a Russian peasant.

* He sits on a low seat, fixed on the fore axle.

AFTER

AFTER trying various methods to extricate the carriage in vain, and without a murmur, though the weather was piercingly cold, and he was dripping wet, he loosened the horses, and yoking them to the hinder part of the carriage, he brought it backwards to dry ground. He endeavoured to pass at another place, and was again foiled; yet he preserved an evenness of temper, which I did not think our nature possessed. He did not cease a moment from applying such aids as were best adapted to our relief; nor once shrunk from a chilling wind and rain, which had thrown me into an ague; but severe patience, and an endurance of the roughest inclemency of weather, are qualities with which the peasant of Russia is constitutionally endowed. Whilst we were struggling against this difficulty, which seemed to me remediless, a passenger leading some horses, saw the embarrassment, and cheerfully yoking two of them to the carriage gave us speedy relief.

ON the 20th of May, arrived at Moscow, distant from Tanboff three hundred and eighty-four miles and one third. From the Volga to this city, I had not seen any land so much elevated as to merit the name of a hill, and but few stones on the ground. The buildings in Russia, with an exception of some of the public structures, and houses of the principal people, are composed of wood, which is so abundant a commodity, that in many places it forms the streets of towns and villages.

In the interior parts of the country, a few of the churches

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have

have lately been built of brick, in modern architecture, and shew a just taste; but the old ones are all of wood, heavy ill shaped fabricks, and hung around with bells of all sizes, which the priests, who seem peculiarly fond of their sound, keep in perpetual chime.

At every halting-place, I must again notice, the people treated me with invariable civility; inviting me into their houses during the change of horses, and supplying, at a moderate rate, the things which I wanted. The roads in Russia, during the dry season, are in a good condition naturally; for little labor is bestowed on them; which indeed from the large tracts of intervening wastes would be impracticable. On some days when the horses were strong, I have travelled from one hundred and twenty, to one hundred and thirty miles, over a country on which the eye could perceive no elevation. The intervening rivers I either passed on floating bridges or ferry boats, there being no fixed bridge on the road from Astracan to this city.

On approaching Moscow, its numerous and lofty spires* shooting through extensive plantations, exhibit a view equally picturesque and magnificent. The gardens interspersed through this city, have given it a more extensive site than is requisite to contain, perhaps, three times the number of its inhabitants, who are computed at three or four hundred thousand.

* I was informed that the steeples in Moscow, amount to sixteen hundred.

THE driver of the carriage conducted me to a German hotel, whose manager, a very assiduous and obliging person, spoke the English language fluently, and though he had experienced a variety of fortunes, some of it very adverse, he had acquired but little knowledge of the world; that is, he was ill qualified to combat its iniquitous practices, or to derive an adequate profit from his profession. By a credulity and benevolence of disposition, he had fallen a prey to many of the foreign adventurers who infest Moscow, among whom I was mortified to see some of my own countrymen numbered.

THIS good, simple publican, being within my knowledge an unique in his profession, and as rare objects are the grand pursuit of modern journalists, I could not pass this character without introducing it to your notice; and I entreat, should you ever visit Moscow, that you will make search for this honest German, and after thanking him for his kindness to the Indian, say, that he was very imprudent in depositing a trust with a person whom he never saw before, nor could reasonably expect to see again.

DURING the day of my halt, my host did not fail to procure me a view of those curiosities, which most attract running travellers at this city, but which having been already minutely described, do not require further illustration. Yet I must make some mention of a bell, the largest probably in the world, and expressive of the inordinate passion of the Russian nation for this.

this species of sonorous instrument. It is composed of various metals, even of gold, and silver; the height measures twenty-one feet, four inches and a quarter, the diameter at the base, twenty-two feet, four inches and three quarters; its weight, one hundred and ninety-eight tons, two hundred and twenty-eight pounds; and its cost is computed at sixty-five thousand, six hundred, and eighty-one pounds. A fire many years ago destroyed the building in which it was suspended, and falling to the ground, where it has since remained, a piece was broken from its side.

Moscow though no longer the capital of the empire, hath not felt those symptoms of decay, which are seen to follow the deprivation of sovereign residence. Aware of the attachment of the ancient nobility of Russia to this city, and also that her spacious dominion required a second capital, Katherine hath strenuously endeavoured to preserve its former importance; and the institutions which have been established, have centred, it is said, a greater portion of wealth and commerce in Moscow, than it possessed before the removal of the court.

THE superior kinds of Russian manufactures are chiefly fabricated in this city from the rough materials, and are transported by water carriage or caravans into the most distant quarters of the empire. An ordinance so salutary will essentially contribute to fix the prosperity of Moscow, which is also promoted by the residence of many of those Russian nobles, who are not employed in the immediate service of the state. They there indulge

dulge that gaiety, dissipation, and pomp, in which they so much delight, at a less expence than at the new capital.

MR. ZCHERNICHOFF, the governor-general of Moscow, has acquired in the administration of his office, a general good name, by the establishment of a vigorous police, and bestowing on the city many ornaments. Standing high in favor of the empress, whom his family had strongly aided in ascending the throne, his desires are considered as equal to those of the court; and it may be deemed equally conducive to the welfare of Moscow, as that of the nation at large, that a subject of such zeal and authority has been placed in so eminent a station. The character of Mr. Zchernichoff deserves the more distinguished notice, as a shameless laxity and corruption are seen to pervade every office and department of this wide empire, to counterpoise its powers and warp the direction of its natural policy.

MR. HANNICOFF having given me a letter to his brother at Moscow, I went to this gentleman's house, where, with much mortification, I saw every thing French. The furniture, the dress of the family, its manners, and the preceptor of the children were all French. The Russian gentry, indeed, from whatever other quarter they have drawn science and literature, have received a large portion of their manners from France; and it is evidently seen, that a connection cemented by so strong a partiality, has occasionally attracted Russia, from its constitutional bias, and infused a spirit of policy inimical to its welfare. The prevalent

prevalent use of the French language and manners in most of the European courts, is not to be accounted the least efficient instrument employed by France, in conducting that general system of intrigue, which marks every measure of her government however trivial.

I WAS received by the deputy-governor of Moscow, to whom I applied for his signature to my passport, in a manner little different from that of an Asiatic chief to his dependent or inferior. He had just risen from his siesta, and was sitting dressed in a loose robe on a sofa of silk, in the front of which I was directed to stand. He asked me some questions on the subject of my journey with more affability than I had expected from his appearance, and the glitter of shew, which surrounded him. It is to be noticed that the Russians of all ranks are of a fallow and brown complexion; few of them, even when young, having a natural bloom of face; this defect I am induced to attribute partially to the excessive warmth of their stoves, and a frequent use of the hot bath, which in Russia contains a more intense heat than I have experienced in any country.

AFTER dining with my German host, whose attentions to me had been indefatigable, and his charge moderate, I left Moscow on the 20th of May; on the next morning I arrived at the town of Klin, and breakfasted with an acquaintance of my Moscow friend. This person, a German, many of whom are scattered over this part of the country, kept an inn, but he said
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with little success; as the Russian gentlemen, in their journies, seldom frequent such houses, and the other classes of people are withheld by their poverty.

THE road from Moscow to Petersburg, measuring four hundred and sixty-nine miles and a third, consists generally of a morass, and is constructed, with some interventions of solid ground, of spars of fir, laid in a parallel direction, and strewed over with earth; this work was performed by Peter I. for establishing a more easy communication between the interior provinces and his new capital. This extensive wooden causeway, founded on so unsubstantial a basis, must at the first sight excite our surprize; but it will in a great degree cease, when it is considered that Russia abounds in timber, in robust vassals, and that the great Peter conducted the operation. My carriage, fixed immediately upon the axles, shook me so violently in its progress over this rough road, that I slept very little until the evening before I reached Petersburg, when being overpowered with fatigue, I lay down on a bed at a post-house, desiring the driver to call me at the expiration of two hours, but no one came near me till the morning.

ON the 25th of May, I entered Petersburg, and procured a commodious lodging at an English tavern. Mr. Shairpe, the British consul, being informed of my story, invited me to his house; and his introduction to many of the English gentlemen, at Petersburg, enabled me to pass very pleasantly, a three weeks residence

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there; he presented me also to our ambassador,* whose favourable mention of me in England, was essentially conducive to my welfare.

IN so transient a visitor, it would be a manifest presumption to give any detailed account of this splendid city, or to describe its constitution or laws. I will, however, notice such matter, as its more immediate projection forces on ordinary observation. The view of Petersburg, adorned with its numerous magnificent buildings, intersected by spacious and regular streets, imparts the consequent pleasure of beholding a beautiful object; but when I looked on the period, removed only at the distance of seventy years, when this spot, now covered by a proud city, resorted to by all the nations of the European world, and enriched by an active commerce, was a dreary morass, affording a miserable residence to a hord of rude fishermen. I was inspired with reverence and wonder, when I reflected on the creative genius of the man who had accomplished so glorious a work. Other monarchs have modelled armies, aggrandised kingdoms by conquest, or gradual civilization; but Peter at once dispelled the cloud of barbarism, which invveloped his country, and brought it forth to the astonished and applauding view of Europe.

IT is on this ground you must view Petersburg, to render due justice to the memory of its founder, who in rearing his fa-

* Mr. Fitzherbert.

bric, struggled with obstinate prejudice and enraged superstition ; but they fell before his commanding genius. Nor must we forget that thirst of knowledge, which carried him into foreign countries to court their science, and practise their arts. This subject hath insensibly produced a strain of writing, too strongly I fear impregnated with that species of colouring, which marks the composition of the Asiatics, and indeed their ordinary conversation, and which, by an intimate connection with them for many years, has perhaps become habitual to me. When you advert therefore to the societies I have mixed in, and also to a warm impulse, which has prompted me to throw a laurel at the brow of Peter, I hope that this effervescence of style will meet with an indulgent eye.

FROM the dresses of the nobility, enriched by a various display of jewels, their equipage and pompous retinue, the court of Petersburg is said to be the most brilliant in Europe ; and it should seem, that the empress manifestly indulges * this disposition in the courtiers, whether from the congenial propensity of a female mind, or an opinion, that the intrigues and machinations which she has heretofore successfully practised, will not deeply occupy the minds of a people, involved in luxury and dissipation.

THE Russian gentry, especially those attached to the court,

* She has established at Petersburg, four companies of players, of different nations, French, German, Italian and Russian, which receive salaries from the public treasury.

are either in debt, or they expend the full amount of their revenue; and if the testimony of those who have made the experiment is to be credited, we must believe in the extreme venality of the ministers of government, however adverse to the public welfare. The administration of count Panin gave a strong proof of this disposition. The French who have ever avowedly opposed the views of this empire, have afforded without reserve, assistance to its enemies, and who, it is said, restricted its Mediterranean squadron, to eight ships of the line, possessed during Panin's ministry, a leading sway in the Russian cabinet, which they rendered hostile to the general interests of the empire. Since that period, Russia has adopted a more natural policy, and is aware of the salutary expediency of forming a cordial intercourse with the court of London. It is noticed that the Russian gentry learn foreign languages with aptitude, that they readily assume the manners of those whom they visit, and lay them aside with equal facility; and that being a new people, they bear few marks of national originality; but like a mass of ductile matter, receive the impress of objects in contact with them.

THE peasantry are marked with strong characteristic features; they are obedient, attached to their superiors, and possess an obstinate courage; but they are addicted to petty thefts, and to an excessive use of intoxicating liquors. It must surely be held a reproach on the policy and finance of a nation, when the largest
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branch of its revenue is seen to arise from an encouragement of the ruling vice of the people; yet this fact is fully exemplified in Russia, where two capital imposts are laid on corn-brandv. It is sold by government to the dealers, at a fixed rate, from which a large profit is produced, and a duty is collected from every person, who vends it.

WHATEVER censure the present Katherine may have incurred in swerving from the cardinal virtue of her sex, we must unreservedly say, that she hath made some atonement for that deviation, by establishing a wise and vigorous system of government, by a liberal encouragement of the arts, and an exercise of humanity to her subjects, meriting the example of the most polished nations. She possesses a munificence, which has much endeared her to the people, and which an occasion of displaying happened some days before my arrival at Petersburg. Being informed that an extensive pile of wooden buildings, appropriated to the use of merchants and tradesmen, was burning with violence, she immediately proceeded to the spot, where exhorting the firemen to an active execution of their duty, she assured those who had suffered by the conflagration, that the buildings should be reconstructed at the public expence and of more substantial materials.

AMONG the many monuments of grandeur, raised by Katherine, the most attracting is an equestrian statue, erected to the memory of the great Peter, which is placed in front of the council-

council-house, and in a situation commanding a view of the port; nor have I seen any figure which exhibits a bolder or more just aspect of nature, except that of our first Charles in London. It stands on a high block of stone, whose summit slanting, gives an ascending position to the horse, one of the hinder feet of which bruises the head of a serpent.* The figure of Peter looks towards the Neva, having the right arm stretched forth with an expanded hand, giving to all nations encouragement and protection. Often did I visit this statue of Peter, and in reviewing the stupendous work, which his hand has raised, I have gazed on it with admiration and delight; and did the tenets of my faith permit, Peter should be chosen my tutelar saint.

PAUL PETROWITZ, entitled the Grand Duke of Russia, and the only issue of the empress, having been little brought forward to the public notice, the essential parts of his character remain undeveloped. The foreigners who have access to him, say, that he is endowed with discretion, is beloved in his family, and observes a just punctuality in the discharge of his accounts, a quality the more deserving of praise, as it is rarely found among the nobility of Russia, who have become notorious by an accumulation of debts and a common failure of payments.

* Emblematical of the malignant prejudices, which this prince encountered and overcome.

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The grand duke is the nominal president of the admiralty, though he does not officiate in that department, or possess any influence in the cabinet ; but aware of the empress's jealousy of domestic interference, he lives wholly abstracted from business.

A GENTLEMAN, who had acquired a conversant knowledge of the court of Petersburg, observed to me that a female reign was most favorable to the views of the Russian nobility ; it afforded a wider scope, to their ambition, avarice, and intrigue, which under the eye of a prince, especially if he were active, would necessarily be limited, and that they would ever dislike and strive to exclude a male succession ; nor does this observation want proofs of support, in the four last reigns of this empire.

IN closing these desultory remarks, I am induced to notice, that those Russians who have not yet adopted the manners and dress of Europe, and they probably include three fourths of the nation, resemble the Asiatics, and particularly Tartars, in many conspicuous instances. They wear the long gown, the sash, and the cap ; and they consider the beard as a type of personal honor. The hot bath as in Asia is in common use, even with the lowest classes of the Russians, who perform also many ordinary ablutions, not practised by any northern people, and when not prevented by their occupations, they sleep at noon. In the manner of Asia, the Russians observe to their superiors an extreme

treme submission, and their deportment is blended with a fluency of address and language, which is not warranted by their appearance, or the opinions generally formed of them.

By imposing a superior value on this quality, the Russians, it should seem, have neglected to cultivate the more essential virtues, a want of which is often experienced by the foreign merchants, who have incurred heavy losses by their want of faith. The copeck of Russia, a copper coin, in name, and apparently in value is the same which was current in Tartary during the reign of Timur; and as the passage illustrating this fact is curious, I will lay it before you.

“THE dearth was so great in the Tartar camp, that a pound of millet sold for seventy dinars copeghi, an ox's head for an hundred, and a sheep's head for two hundred and fifty.”*

This occurrence happened during the expedition of Timur into Astracan, at a period of two hundred years previous to the Russian acquisition of that kingdom. Should a national connection between Russia and Tartary be ascertained, a reverse of the general progress of conquest, which has been seen to stretch to the southward, will appear exemplified in the Russian nation, who penetrating into the higher parts of Europe, have fixed a capital in the sixtieth degree of latitude. Embarking at

* Shirriff ud Dein's History of Timur, translated by Petit de la Croix.

Peterburgh, in the middle of June, on board of a trading vessel, I arrived in England in the latter end of July.

HAVING now brought you to the close of a long journey, the performance of which was chiefly derived from a vigorous health, and a certain portion of perseverance, I bid you an affectionate farewell, and I trust, that you will never have cause to impute to any of the various facts which have been brought forward in the body of the letters, the colour of passion or the views of interest. Amicus Plato, &c. The opinions deduced from them, given by a man slenderly conversant in the higher classes of science, and who has yet much to seek in the abstruser page of human life, I freely commit to your censure, as also the manner of writing, which I fear will be judged offensive to the chasteness, distinguishing the language of the present age.

F I N I S.